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SUPER PLAY

ISSUE 36

OCTOBER 1995

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Is this the surprise hit of 1995? We test out the VIRTUAL BOY

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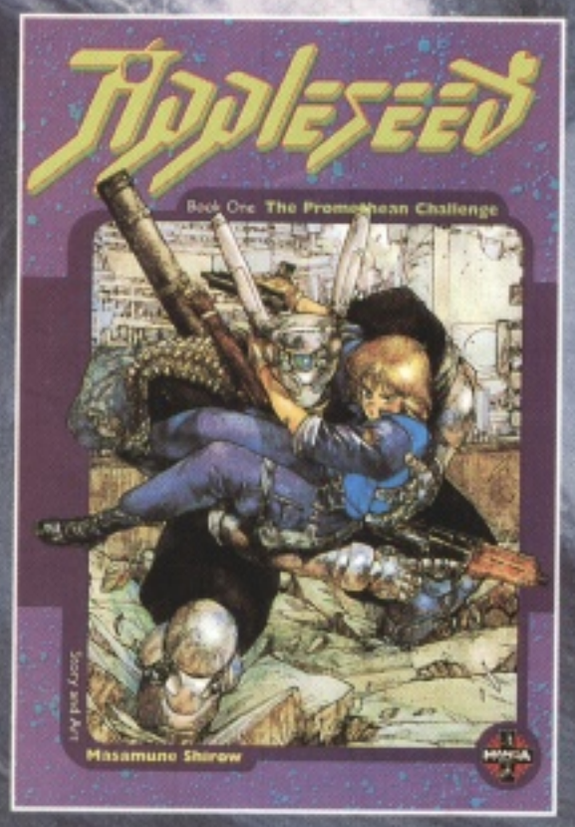

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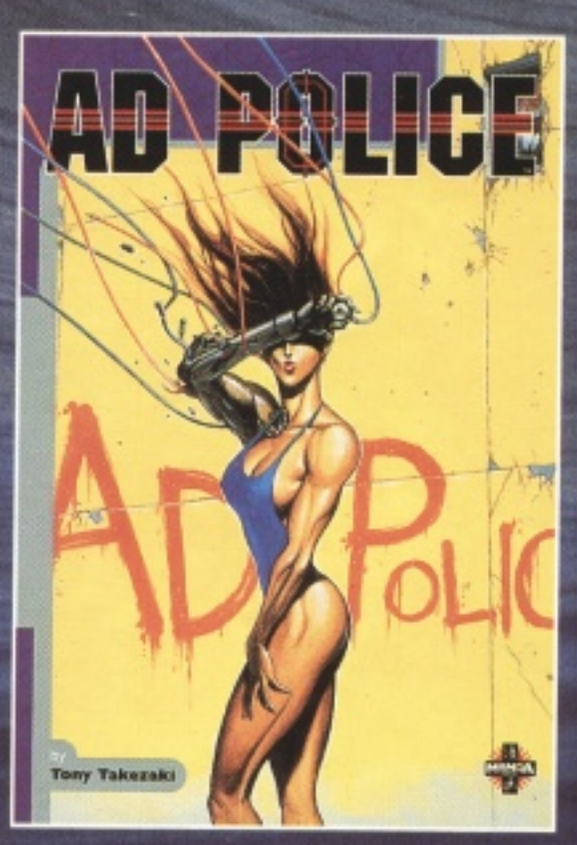

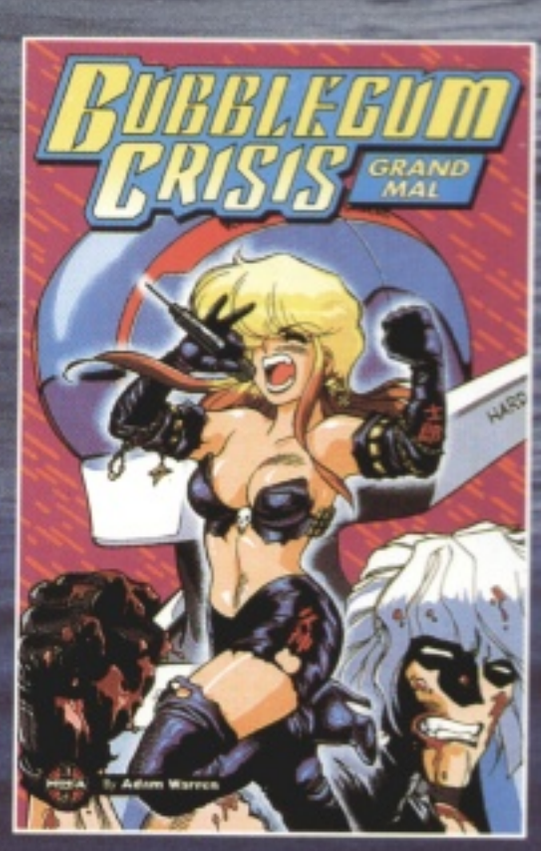

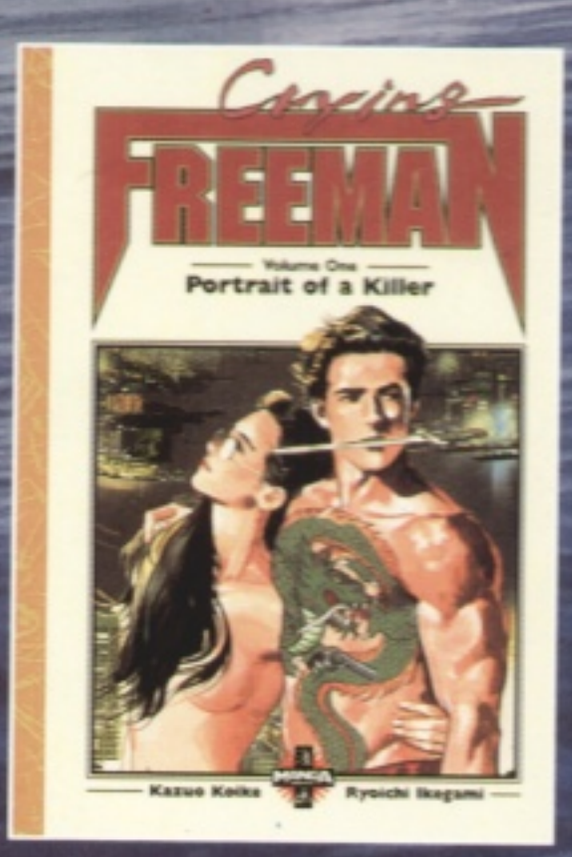

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If you're too lazy to step outdoors into the fresh air, if you don't like the sun's evil rays, if your legs have grown weak from all that sitting in front of your SNES, why not e-mail us here – splay@futurenet.co.uk

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Super Play comes from the same office as *Sega Power*, *Ultimate Future Games*, *GamesMaster*, and *Total!*, and we're friends with *Amiga Power*, *CD-ROM Today*, *Amiga Format*, *PC Format*, *ST Format*, *Edge*, *PC Gamer*, *.net* and *SFX* too.

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Future PUBLISHING

THE SUPER PLAY EDITORIAL

from the BIG CHAIR

Our full contents listing starts just over the page

Mario madness is sweeping town! So much so that we've (almost) been tempted into wearing our comedy Mario moustaches despite the blistering heat in our office. Well, not really, but the joypad did have to be surgically removed from our Tony's hands every evening at kicking out time...

In Mario's latest bid to take over the Nintendo gaming world as we know it, two corking new games have sprung forth from nowhere... Not only have we got the first UK review of the spangly new Mario game *Yoshi's Island*, but we've also got exclusive news of a brand new Nintendo/Squaresoft (steady!) collaboration in the form of *Super Mario RPG*. Slink to the news pages to read about this... Another *Super Play* scoop before we can even say turn to page 6.

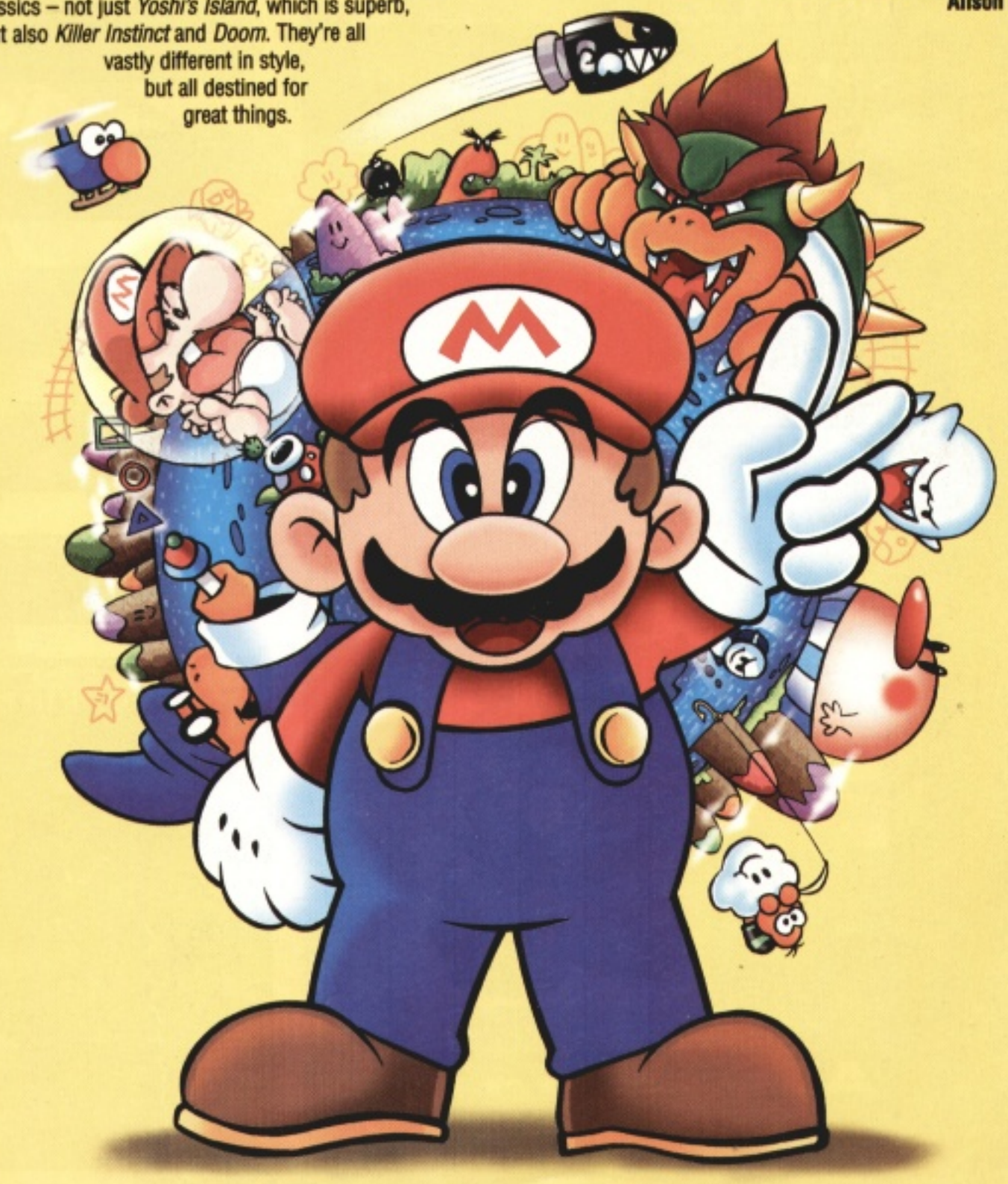
This issue has to be one of the best of the year with reviews of three games which are destined to become classics – not just *Yoshi's Island*, which is superb, but also *Killer Instinct* and *Doom*. They're all vastly different in style, but all destined for great things.

This month has also seen the team blundering around the office trying to readjust their eyesight after total immersion in a new and bizarre 3D world. Yup, one of the first ever Virtual Boys to appear in the UK is right here, in our very office. We've thoroughly playtested the system and even reviewed a few games for you. Turn to page 10 for all the info on Nintendo's new red thing. It may not be a SNES, but we know you lot like to keep abreast of all that Nintendo are up to these days...

We hope you like your free gift this month. As a small token of our appreciation for you choosing *Super Play* above all other mags, we present to you a collectable and very covetable piece of *Killer Instinct* artwork.

Other big names sneaking themselves in for review this ish include *Batman Forever*, *Primal Rage* and *Demolition Man*. But don't waste any more time hanging around this page, far more exciting stuff lies within...

Alison Harper
Editor



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SCOOP!

Super Play brings you exclusive news of the Nintendo/ Squaresoft collaboration...

ABC: 37,747*

*We are STILL Britain's best-selling independent Super Nintendo magazine!

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YOSHI'S ISLAND

EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

page 30

Incredible! Until recently it was one of Nintendo of Japan's best-kept secrets and now it's one of *Super Play*'s highest scoring games of all time. Discover why...

VIRTUAL BOY

The Virtual Boy has only just hit the streets in Japan, and in true *Super Play* style we've pipped the other mags to the post to bring you RED HOT EXCLUSIVE Virtual Boy news and reviews. Prepare to experience a new dimension in gaming.

page 10

IRRESPONSIBLE PICTURES

All the latest Manga news and reviews. This month *Project A-KO 3*, *Bubblegum Crisis 3* and *Angel Cop 5*, among others, get the *Super Play* treatment.

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SUPER

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SUPER PLAY EXCLUSIVE!

A MARRIAGE MADE IN HEAVEN

Yes! The rumour that has kept SNES gamers buzzing for almost a year has proved true in grand style – the next big game from Japan will be Super Mario RPG, a collaboration between Nintendo and Square Soft. As usual, Super Play is first with the hottest news...

Check out those classic Square sunrays streaming in. But just what is the Italian one doing?

Mario and his distinctly Toad-like chums meet up with a juggling clown. Why? Indeed.

Looking on the surface almost like a 1995 instalment of *Equinox*, rendered with *Donkey Kong Country*-style graphics, *Super Mario RPG* is the bouncing baby soon to be born to the most respected parentage in videogaming.

Due to weigh in at 32Mbits, the game's origins can be traced back to January, when Nintendo approached Square with a view to producing a game which would incorporate the strong characters from Mario's world along with the structure and storyboarding skills that have made Square one of the most sought-after – and certainly among the most successful, having shipped over 13 million carts to date – software developers in Japan.

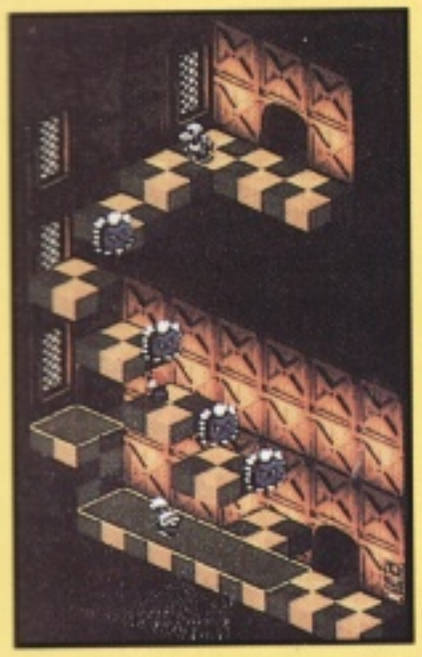
As is always the case, Nintendo have been secretive regarding specifics, but *Super Play* has learned that it's Princess Daisy's (known as the rather more lovely sounding Princess Peach in Japan) fault that Mario has to get out of bed early to go off on another adventure. She's been captured again, you see, and, with the help of Luigi – albeit, for once, in an NPC (non-player character) role – Mario must explore the isometric 3D landscape in search of the hapless wench.

Considering Nintendo's success with *Zelda III*, it's no surprise that the game is an action RPG, with realtime battles taking the place of Square's favoured statistical approach. Like *Equinox*, the game is made up of both open overground sections, where Mario can build experience by fighting the liberally spread-out lesser nasties, and castles, fortresses and caves, where boss encounters take place.

Nintendo have yet to reveal how Mario comes equipped to deal with this entirely new type of game, but it's safe to say that, for once, bouncing on nasties' heads won't be the order of the day. But neither, we suspect, will Mario come laden with a double-edged broadsword with which to brutally hack off Koopa Troopas' heads.

EXPRESS

NEWS NETWORK SUPER NINTENDO NEWS NETWORK SUPER NINTENDO



In true Mazza fashion, '?' blocks hold bonus items.

Negotiating these thwomps in isometric perspective is guaranteed to loosen some follicles.

This rather effeminate castle is situated high up in the clouds.

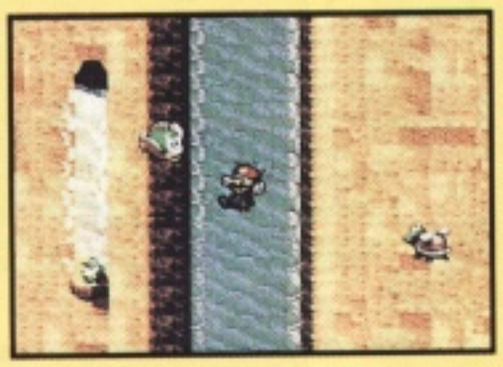
KOOPA

Never has Koopa looked so mean, nor, it must be said, magnificent than in *Super Mario RPG*. It's presently thought that he may actually turn out to be an ally in this game...

PRINCESS PEACH

Here's the source of all Mario's worries, who's known to Western gamers as Princess Daisy. She's the sort who'd have difficulty getting down to the corner shop without being kidnapped.

Hmm, very Jack and the Beanstalk, Mario.



Every sprite, from fish to winged Koopa Troopas, has been pre-rendered.

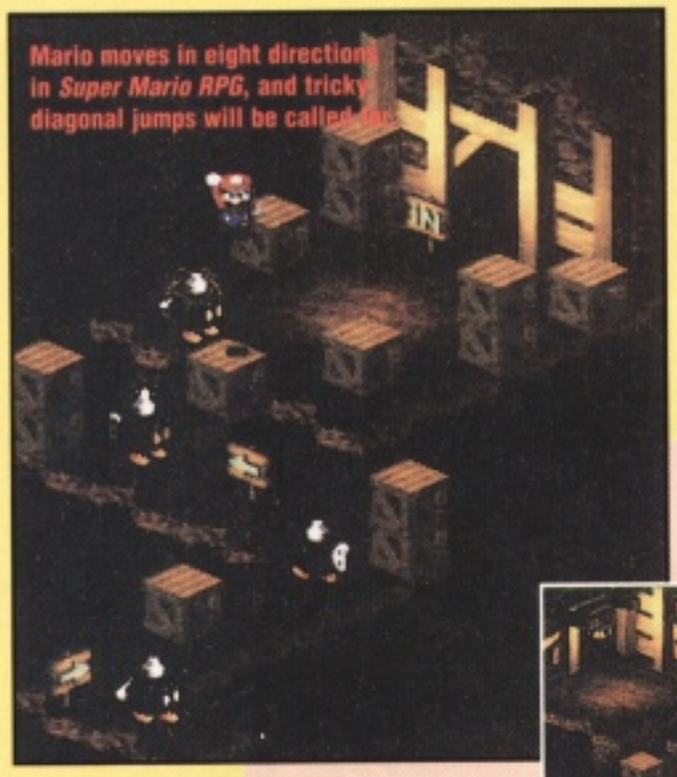
This is one of *SMRPG*'s many bonus games. Step on the strings to play musical notes.

The *Equinox* influence is evident in this Bullet Bill-infested section.

There will, of course, be a number of elements from games like *Super Mario World* that'll appear in *Super Mario RPG*. Health-giving mushrooms, for example, can be collected by jumping up and plucking them out of the sky, while stars will endow temporary super powers to the moustached mischief-maker.

A point of particular note is the fact that this will be the first game to use Nintendo's in-house developed DSP (digital signal processor), the SA-1. Nintendo have claimed that the chip is, like the Super

MORE SUPER MARIO RPG NEWS OVER THE PAGE



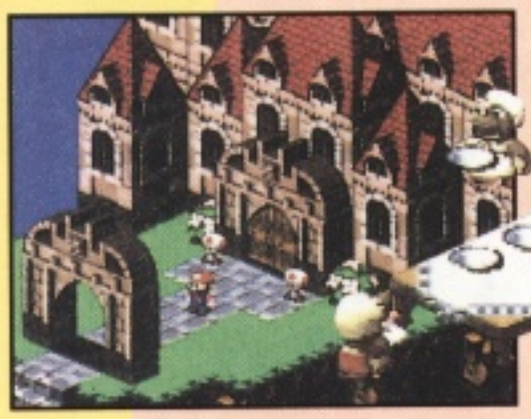
Mario moves in eight directions in *Super Mario RPG*, and tricky diagonal jumps will be called for.

An underground mine finds more *Solstice*-style action. Note the *DKC*-style lighting.

FX2, an accelerator, i.e. it works in conjunction with the SNES's CPU to perform calculations more swiftly to achieve smoother, faster frame rates and more sprites on-screen than would be possible on an unaided machine. We understand, however, that the chip's chief purpose is in allowing fast compression and decompression of data, allowing for SNES carts to hold up to as much as four times the data as it would in an uncompressed form. In the case of *Super Mario RPG*, then, we could be talking in terms of around 128 Mbits (or 16 megabytes) of raw data tucked away on the cart. A vast amount of memory is essential in such an undertaking, of course – *Super Mario RPG*'s game map is huge, and rendered from top to bottom with lavishly hued backdrops and characters.

No release date has yet been suggested, though it's likely to appear in Japan in the early part of 1996. We'll have an exclusive interview with the creators of the game in next month's issue, where we'll probe them on, among other things, why daisy is peach in Japan.

And you thought Cannon Centres were the last word in cross-country travel...



Toad's castle (left) is the setting for a top nosh up.

You won't find such hospitality at this place. Ooh, feel that atmosphere.

In-game scenes aren't this big, of course – some of these have been stuck together.

NASTIES

Though *Super Mario RPG* pulls in elements from other games in the series (you should be able to recognise most of these characters from somewhere or other), there is a host of new foes. Check out that flying-piggy's-head-geezer.

RETURN TO RENDER

Rare's experience with Silicon Graphics hardware has had a far-reaching effect over at Nintendo, largely thanks to the success of *Donkey Kong Country*.

Once Rare officially got into bed with Nintendo – Howard Lincoln's crew bought a quarter share in the Warwickshire-based coders, who also brought us the rather whiffy but nèvertheless polished *Battletoads*, earlier this year – it was only a matter of time before their ACM techniques were passed over to the boys in Kyoto.

The beauty of the whole ACM process is that it's something that's generated Rare an enormous amount of credit, without actually being a particularly ground-breaking technique. The SNES is a horribly underrated machine, and it was merely the conceived limitations of the machine that created such expressions of surprise and delight when *DKC* was first unveiled.

ACM sprites only differ from the convential hand drawn variety in that they're rendered, step-by-step, on SGI equipment. The resulting images look more solid than hand-drawn – the downside is that ACM graphics use up considerably more memory than any other style.

Rare's success with ACM lay in combining a cleverly considered colour pallette – in order to achieve maximum effect on-screen with minimum processor outlay – with some neat programming trickery and a super-slick memory compression routine.

As has already been admitted by Nintendo, anyone could have achieved such effects – indeed, Ocean's forthcoming Lobo uses *Killer Instinct*-style characters – it's just that Rare were willing to put the time and money into researching it.

Wireframe to solid Mario in three, er, easy(ish) steps.

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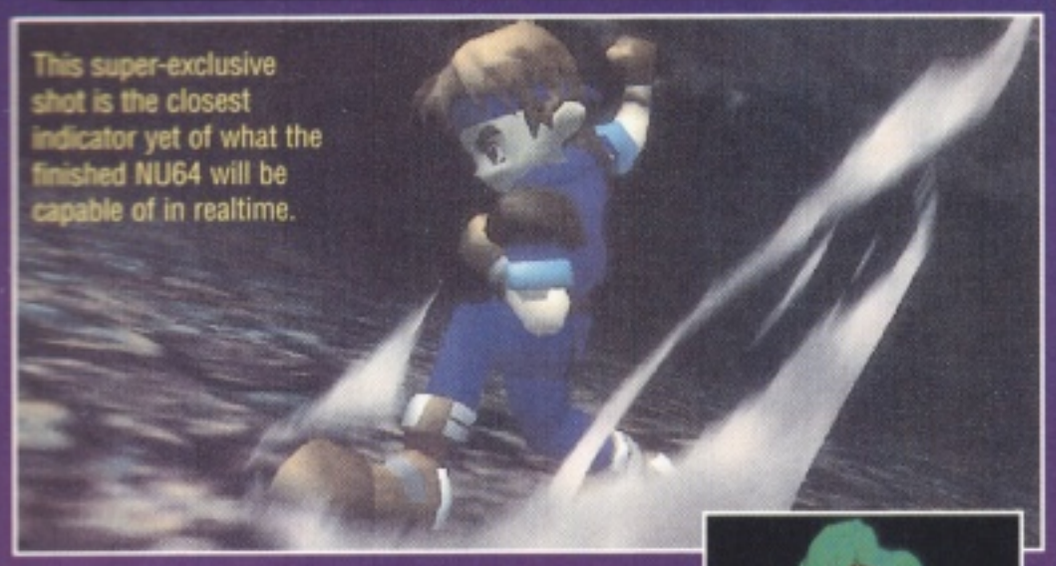


This super-exclusive shot is the closest indicator yet of what the finished NU64 will be capable of in realtime.

The recent Siggraph show, held at the Los Angeles Convention Center from 8-10 August, attracted the cream of the world's high-end computer graphics community, with wares on show from leading-edge companies such as Alias and MultiGen – both of whom are currently working closely with Nintendo on 3D development software tools for the NU64.

This year's event, however, was of particular interest to Nintendo fans because of the first ever attendance by Square Soft. The Japanese giant's US arm was there primarily to attract Western programming and development talent, but couldn't resist powering up an SGI Onyx Reality Workstation demo showing how the Ultra 64 version of *Final Fantasy* (see page 22) is planned to look.

This is how Square's 3D designers have realised *FFIII*'s Terra (or Tina) on SGI rendering gear. Corky.

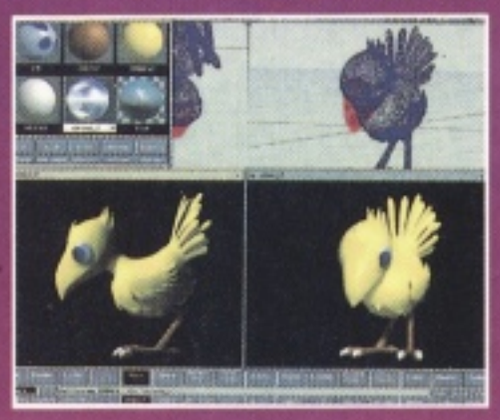
In it, three characters (looking distinctly reminiscent of a selection last seen in *FFIII*) come across a castle guarded by an giant brick-like robot. A battle ensues, and the characters unleash their attacks in turn, the viewpoint zooming into them individually as they do so, and panning out and around to show each effect. And, yes, it's all rendered in a typically stunning SGI style.

"We're hoping to get images of this quality, moving at this rate, on the finished Ultra 64 unit, but we're still looking into it at the moment," a Square representative told our man on the spot. Which is a pretty impressive revelation, and one that gives credence to Nintendo's own claims concerning the hardware's power.

Battle scenes in the NU64 version of *Final Fantasy* will, hope Square, match this stunning quality.

Square have comparatively little experience in the field of 3D-image generation and animation, and it's little surprise that they're looking to the States for new recruits. Some would claim, of course, that with 2D work of the quality of *Final Fantasy III*, Square need not really worry about that oh-so-important third dimension, and they themselves would doubtless agree, in fact Square have recognised the importance of 2D by actively pursuing Western 2D artists too.

So now you know what job to pursue when you've finished school/college/poly/uni (or, of course, told your current boss where exactly he can file those reports).



Super Play is the only mag to bring you piccies of a Chocobo being born in 3D. See?

KONAMI.

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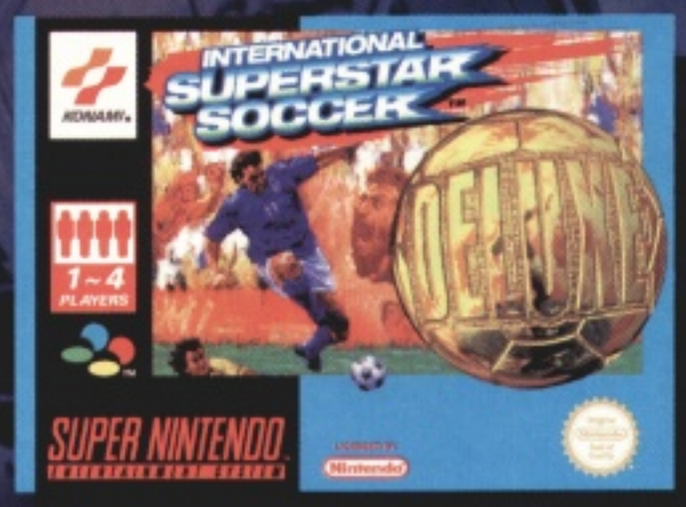
Get ready for the only game with real BALLS!



When a team introduces a new season strip do you feel ripped off? When a games publisher releases a sequel do you ever feel let down, a bit like someone had punctured your footballs? How long will you believe them when they tell you that the new '95 or '96 version is so different to the last one?

Well, get ready for a whole new experience - a sequel with a difference! In fact, there's over 40 improvements or additions to the "best ever" soccer game; and we're not talking a load of old balls.

New teams, new players, new stadiums, new strategies and new techniques - the best just got better!

It's Outstanding!

Release Date: 17th November 1995 SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

VIRTUAL BOY

ON TEST

Nintendo's 32-bit virtual monster finally hits the streets, and *Super Play* is on hand with a full report on the unit itself and its current games line-up, plus a look at future releases.

A sweaty postie waddling into *Super Play*'s grime-laden delivery bay signalled the long-awaited arrival of our Virtual Boy this month.

We've spent the last few weeks stripping it down in our special, conducting leading-edge experiments into its peculiar and intriguing 3D capabilities. That and getting very sore eyes, coming away from the machine with amusing pressure marks across our faces, and fighting each other over whose turn it is next on *Red Alarm*.

THE UNIT

Controls – along the top of the unit is the focus knob, which slides back and forth, and the, erm, other knob, which goes round and round. This is used during the Veebee's startup sequence, where you can fiddle with its 3D-ness until it's just right.

More controls – along the underside of the Veebee can be found the headphones socket, volume control, multiplayer link-up socket (a seemingly exact replica of the design used on the Game Boy) and the joypad/power delivery socket, which, strangely, uses the same design as the joypad socket of a UK NES.

Lenses – these are spaced to match the average person's eye spacing perfectly. So if, for some reason, you've got one in your left armpit, you may have to forget those dreams you might have had of using a Veebee to any degree of real success.

Stand – a sturdy thing with rubber-covered 'feet' to prevent slippage. It's not nearly high enough for some of the more sizeable *Super Play* staffers, though, and, unless you can find a surface high enough, you'll run the risk of having to find a girlfriend called Esmeralda.

Joypad – measuring roughly 6" x 5" x 2.75", this is both controller – being slightly reminscent of that of the PlayStation – and power source to the Veebee. Six AA/HP7 batteries slot into the rear of the 'pad and give it a weighty but still remarkably comfortable feel.

Cart slot – the games slide easily into this here aperture. There's no cart lock, making it possible to remove them while the system's actually in play. We aren't sure if this will damage the unit yet, but our money's on the consequences being generally unpleasant, so we can't recommend it.

Visor – the bit which endows immersability (sort of) upon the system. It's made of a soft but stiff foam rubber compound and can be completely removed from the unit. So if you've friends with notoriously greasy foreheads, it might be best for them to buy their own – they sell separately in Japan and should be available from importers.

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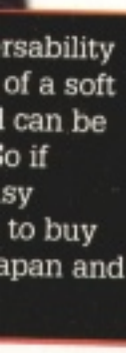
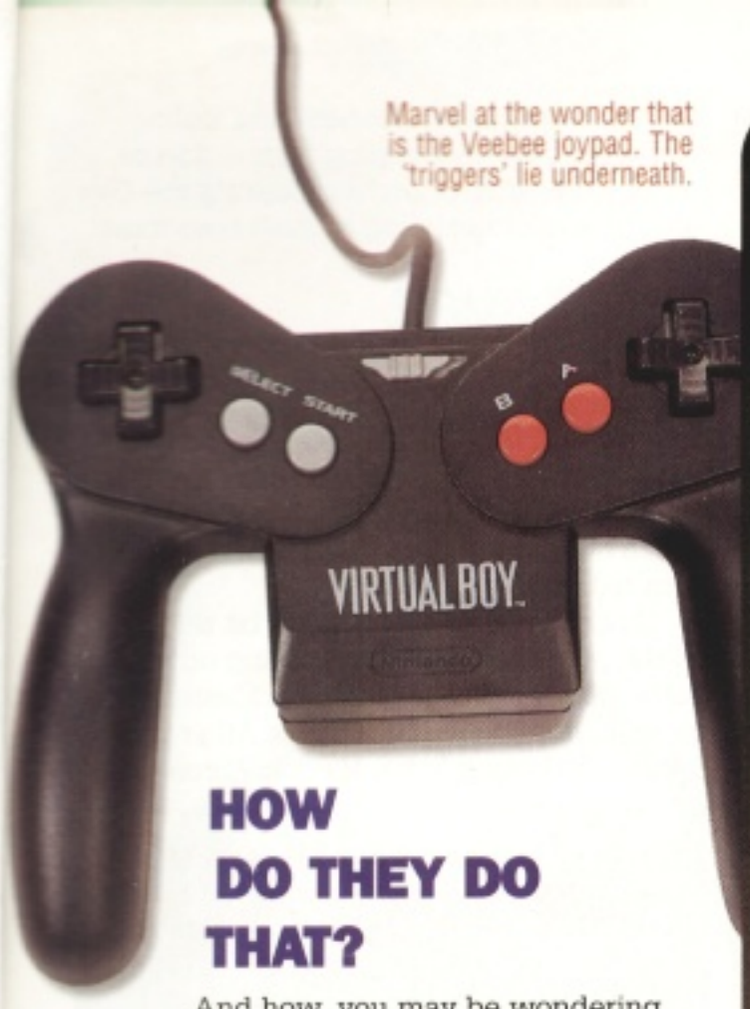


Marvel at the wonder that is the Veebee joypad. The 'triggers' lie underneath.



HOW DO THEY DO THAT?

And how, you may be wondering, has Nintendo's Gumpei Yokoi and his team managed to create a system producing proper 3D images? We'll try to explain.

A line of LEDs (light-emitting diodes) controls each of the images you see when you poke your head into the Virtual Boy. Each generates a vertical line of dots (pixels) which are then projected through a magnifying lens and onto a mirror (or, as it's officially called, a 'counterbalanced resonant vibrating scan mirror', for what it matters), which in turn bounces the image onto the screen. Now, the LEDs are only generating one vertical line at a time, but they sweep across the mirror – and therefore the screen – altering the data as they go to make up a proper rectangular image. And they obviously do this incredibly quickly.

The 3D effect is achieved by making the two screens display slightly different data. In *Mario's Tennis*, for example, through the left lens Mario might be standing one centimetre to the left of the court's edge, while he may be, say, only half a centimetre in the right lens. Your eyes bring the two together, et voilà – Mario in 3D. And stuff.

THE SIDE EFFECTS

After the videogaming epilepsy storm, it's unsurprising that Nintendo are well aware of treating customers with care. With this in mind, each Veebee game features an optional auto-save. This is for those people who, along with probably having trouble with tying shoelaces, can't remember how long they've been 'immersed'. When selected, a separate 'screensaver'-type image pops up after a shortish period of play to remind you to take a break.

We can't, of course, speculate too much over the potential eye problems risked by users of the Virtual Boy for fear of incurring the weight of Nintendo's expensively upholstered lawyers, but we can at least tell

Mario Clash takes an aged theme and gives it a good old sprucing up.

THE GAMES

A-ha, the most important component of a new system's launch – the actual games; those wee nuggets of entertainment that'll ensure either a big pile of spent Duracells in the coming weeks, or a hastily scribbled entry to the 'Hardware For Sale' section in Supermarket, depending on their worth. And who to judge them? Here, let *Super Play*'s internationally renowned part-time playboy pop stars Wil and Tony deftly guide you through the entire range of launch titles. The marks are out of ten, mainly because we just say so.

Red Alarm

T&E Soft

It's no surprise, of course, that one of the first Veebee games is a proper 3D affair, with a full polygon-generated playing environment. What is perhaps surprising is that T&E Soft, a company not famed for such work, should be the developers responsible for it.

But they've done a relatively good job. Though not as fast as *Star Fox* running at full steam, *Red Alarm* is nevertheless a very fluid game, which, even with a packed screen, doesn't noticeably suffer from slowdown.

Shoot those little stickmen in T&E Soft's *Red Alarm*, one of the best Veebee games yet.

It's an out-and-out shoot-'em-up, presented in the form of linear levels each leading to a 'Danger Zone', the area where a boss character resides. The levels vary from simple space station-type constructions to subterranean caverns, and feature many different touches to wonder over. Our favourite so far has to be the launch bay section on level one, where little stickmen ground crew members scatter at your arrival allowing you to round them up and blow them away.

Unlike *Starfox*, you have complete freedom of movement within a level's confines, so you can even turn around and head back the way you've come if you've missed a bonus or whatever.

Four views are selectable: behind far, behind near, in-craft and external pan – the latter being a view which moves around your ship in response to your own movements.

The actual 3D effect in *Alarm* is less impressive than we were expecting, mainly because the graphics can't be presented in very obvious layers the way flat backgrounds and sprites can.

The '3D-ness' is still there, of course, and approaching sections of landscape look convincing despite their wireframe nature.

Alarm is one game which makes full use of the Veebee's pad. The left D-pad controls normal craft movement; the right performs similarly, albeit in larger increments (this function isn't vital in play, as it happens). The right trigger shoots, while the left engages hard turns, and, finally, A and B control speed.

A good launch title, then, and one that's bound to sell in huge quantities mainly because it's the only Veebee game so far to use polygons. We'll have to wait a while to see something rivalling *Starfox*, but this'll do in the meantime.

7

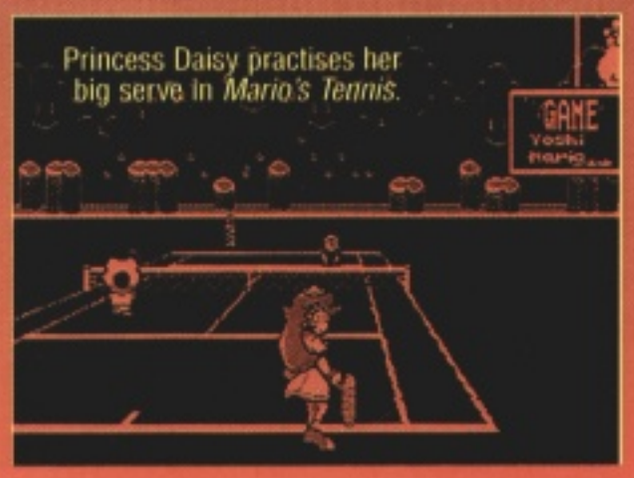
Tony

Mario's Tennis

Nintendo

The pack-in game with the Virtual Boy in the States, *Mario's Tennis* is a relatively straightforward update of one of first ever Game Boy titles.

After choosing to play as Mario, Luigi, Princess Daisy, Yoshi, Toad



Princess Daisy practises her big serve in *Mario's Tennis*.

The pin connectors concept seen on Veebee carts is a far cry from the SNES equivalent.

Carts

Veebee carts are approximately 3" x 2.5" x 0.25" in size, and have bare edge connectors. Because these exposed edges have no less than 60 pin-sockets, you also get a snug-fitting protective cover with each cart. These covers are also particularly good for scraping encrusted food spillages off desktops, we've found.

or Donkey Kong Jr., you take to the court in either a singles or doubles match. Setting up to play is dead simple, with two types of match available – one-off or tournament – and only one type of surface.

In play, A performs a lob and B a standard stroke (fore or backhand, depending on where you're standing in relation to the ball), but it's also possible to perform an overhead smash and even a dinking drop shot if you're close to the net.

The familiar Nintendo characters have been realised accurately and with good humour – they all waggle their hips as they wait for a serve and show both delight and disgust depending on the outcome of a point.

It's a fine little puzzle game is *Panic Bomber*, but you'll finish it in no time at all.

The game's 3D isn't perhaps as effective as we'd expected – the court looks, well, virtual(ish), but the characters don't quite achieve the same kind of effect.

It's one of the easiest-to-play tennis games yet, and especially fun in doubles mode, where, having missed the ball from a close-to-the-net position, you just hope your team mate behind you gets to it, never actually knowing what's going on behind you.

If not as enduring as the likes of *Super Tennis* or *Super Family Tennis* on the SNES, *Mario's Tennis* offers bags more character and certainly a feel like no other example.

6

Tony

Panic Bomber

Hudson Soft

Alas, not the 3D version of *Bomberman* with a four-player link-up (can you imagine the scene?) you were maybe hoping for, but a *Puyo Puyo* clone featuring everyone's favourite fuse fetishist and a host of other characters from *Super Bomberman 3*.

Although you'd be forgiven for thinking that the *Tetris* genre wasn't perhaps the best choice for the virtual treatment, Hudson Soft have done a surprisingly good job here.

While the game itself is still flat, there are plenty of little embellishments and characters floating around and popping out in front of you to liven up the whole shebang. Your opponent, who appears in the middle of the screen, is split up into lots of levels that all move separately, something akin to watching *Captain Pugwash* live, and even fizzing bombs have sparks that fly out towards you.

The game itself is standard Puyo fodder. You have to match up sets of three icons (you can choose from five different sets, ranging from characters to simple shapes) vertically, horizontally or diagonally and they'll disappear with varying effects – usually it'll be something to do with filling up, or doing something nasty, to your enemy's stack. This often results in unbombable bricks or, sometimes, something special like a little Bomberman popping up in the foreground, firing a laser into the distance and getting rid of a load of blocks for you.

The problem with *Panic Bomber* is that battling against a host of bizarre adversaries and vaguely horror themed Bombermen until you beat them all should only take you the best part of twenty minutes.

Amazingly, Hudson Soft have even seen fit to include a password at certain points in the proceedings should you find the going a bit too tough, but that's highly unlikely.

True, this could have been so much better, or at least longer, but it's fun while it lasts and uses the Virtual Boy 's 3D thang to good effect.

6

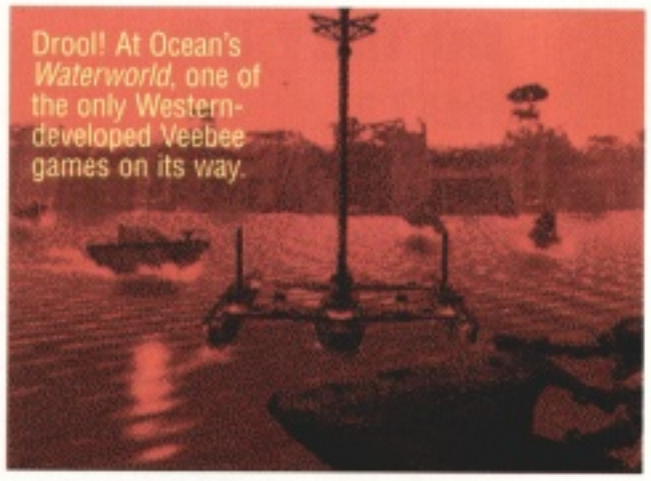
Wil

you that you'll get a disorientated feeling – somewhat akin to stepping from a cinema into the daylight, or perhaps leaving the Dog and Duck after spending a lunch hour there.

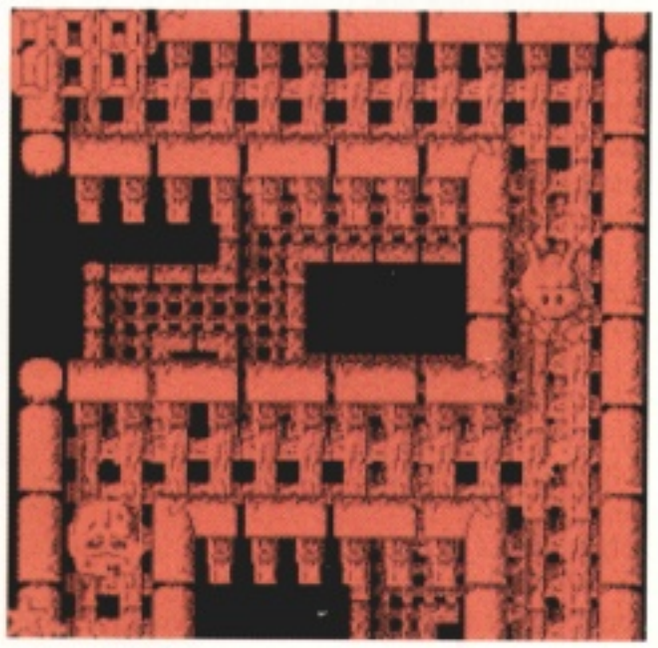
THE FUTURE

The games on their way to the Veebee are a pleasingly varied bunch. If bowling's your bag, Athena's *Virtual Bowling* looks a competent sim, with a full 3D alley. Smaller balls can be found in T&E Soft's *Virtual Golf*, which offers Daliesque hoots aplenty, albeit with red greens, obviously.

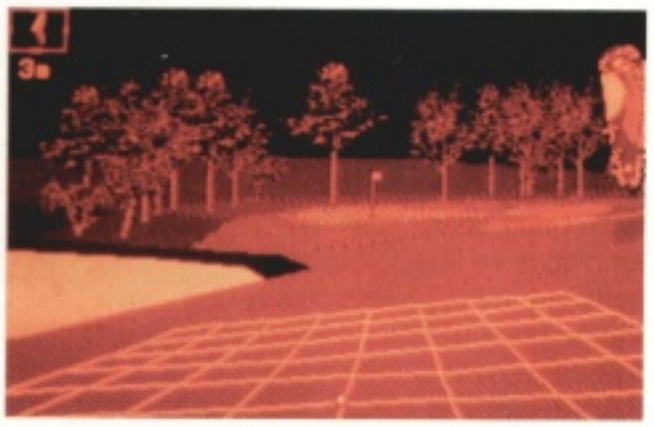
Straight action games are a bit thinner on the ground. I'MAX are working on a game with a realtime *Dungeon Master*-style maze environment, plus there's Atlus' *Jack Bros.* and Hudson Soft's *Vertical Force* (both covered in *SP34*).



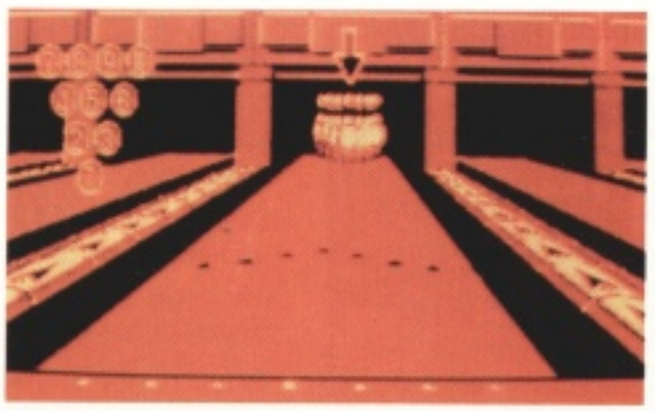
Drool! At Ocean's *Waterworld*, one of the only Western-developed Veebee games on its way.



Gasp! At Atlus' *Jack Bros.*, offering mazes, puzzles and strange goings-on by the wheelbarrowful.



Smile smarmily! At T&E Soft's *Virtual Golf*, the only golf game in history with red greens.



Get not at all excited! By T&E Soft's *Virtual Bowling*, which offers, yes, 3D ball-on-pin action.

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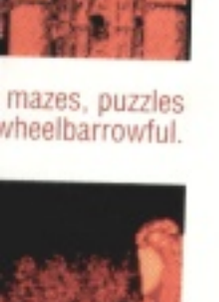

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Can you see one of these babies gracing your tabletop?

One game that should sell well is *Mario Clash*. Although similar to the original *Mario Bros.* coin-op (which dates back to 1983), Nintendo have spruced up the game in the obvious areas – the higher platforms, for example, are further 'into' the screen – and it's nippier than the original. It's an ideal candidate for the link-up treatment, though it's currently not known whether it will be compatible.

Wario's Cruise is the other Mario-related title, and it involves exploring an underground cave network. The action looks predominately platformy, and it plays host to the usual Veebee 3D sprite effects.

THE VERDICT

The most important thing to bear in mind when appraising the Virtual Boy is that it is a gaming system like no other. It's not intended to compete with next generation machines such as the Saturn – nor the Ultra 64 or the SNES, of course – instead, it has created its own market niche.

At this stage, we can't recommend the system to anyone other than the most hardcore videogaming nuts, who grab each and every new system the moment it becomes available (though we know of a few *Super Play* readers who fit into this bracket, and they should get on the horn to their favoured importer right now).

Games are the system's current stumbling block. Even the Game Boy plays host to a library of more sophisticated titles than are currently available for the Veebee, and it looks like being a while before that situation changes.

But the system holds promise, if only because it's a Nintendo product, which means Nintendo software. The potential is incredible – imagine VB *Mario Kart*, with tons of 3D tracks and gasp-inducing effects as you breeze past Donkey Kong Jr., or a VB *Metroid*, stuffed with otherworldy aliens in corking 'virtual vision'. Certainly, if and when such games arrive you'll find out about them first in *Super Play*.

Galactic Pinball

Nintendo

Another unsurprising choice for Veebee game subject matter is pinball. The potential of presenting a pintable as you'd see it in real life began to be exploited in *Super Pinball: Behind The Mask* on the SNES, and now, with the 3D technology available, this should be as close to the real thing as possible.

But it isn't. No, *Galactic* suffers from a lack of attention paid to the real thing by its programmers. You see, when the ball is rolling down either of the side channels onto a flipper it doesn't run smoothly, pausing a bit as it blips over the fattest part. This, of course, gives it a horribly foreign feel to anyone who's played pinball (for real or otherwise), and you'll absolutely hate it for it during your first couple of goes – trying to predict what the ball's going to do (half of the skill required in silverball) is a nightmare.

Once you've gotten used to this nuance, though, it starts to become natural and you concentrate on what else the game has to offer. The four tables – Cosmic, Colony, UFO and Alien – are a pretty varied bunch, one having just two flippers and a wide-open playing area, another will a full four and with lots more going on elsewhere.

Of particular disappointment are the game's bonuses. The completely separate bonus table section which pops up at one point is deathly dull, with no features on offer – the challenge being merely to eliminate groups of swirling stars. One clever bit stands out, though, when, after taking out a group of bumpers on the Cosmic table, Samus Aran's ship from Super Metroid pops up in the middle of the screen. You control it left and right with the left D-pad and proceed to take out little waves of alien craft, *Galaxians*-style, to rack up extra points.

All the usual table features are here, with targets, barriers, bonus holes and a tilt feature, but, given the opportunities afforded its designers by the Veebee, *Galactic Pinball* is lacking. Yes, its 3D is efficiently convincing.

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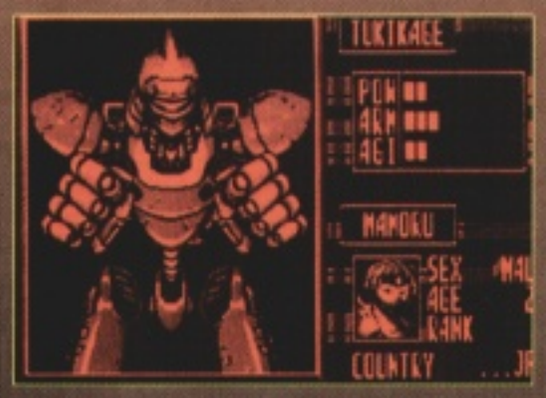
Tony

Virtual Boy games

Veebee games come in a very Game Boy-ish package. Each is packed in a familiarly styled box, along with brightly designed instruction manuals plus all the bumph familiar to Game Boy-ers.



Teleroboxer was one of the first titles announced for the Veebee – it's also one of the most disappointing.

Teleroboxer

Nintendo

If you remember those robot boxing ring games – where you and a pal held a pair of handles with thumb-plungers, attempting to punch each other's head off – which were first popular in the '70s, then you'll be at home with *Teleroboxer* in no time.

Presented with what is essentially a tournament deal, you work your way through seven opponents. Each has its own special moves and tricks, and, as is the case in *Super Punch Out!!*, learning when to expect them – and how to cope with them when they arrive – is the key to success.

Unlike most boxing games, you don't actually see your fighter on-screen. Instead, the viewpoint assumed is an in-head type thing. For those used to the likes of *Boxing: Legend Of The Ring* this obviously this takes a bit of getting used to.

Punches are effected by using both triggers and both D-pads in conjunction, with each side of the joypad being dedicated to an arm. Head jabs, hooks, uppercuts, body blows and rapid punches are available, and picking up exactly what does what and when gets very confusing when you're starting out.

Of the launch titles, *Teleroboxer* probably puts the most effort into looking 3D. Each robotic fighter's body parts lies on its own plane, so that its chest, for example, appears more prominent than its legs. Its and your own swinging fists are when things start to come alive, of course, and the Veebee's unique technology is shown off to the full.

Packed with neat presentation, it's an entertaining little game, with a handy save game function and no shortage of challenge (in fact, it downright bloody hard work to get to grips with). It's just not the gnat's elbows that a Veebee version of *SPO!!* could have been.

6

Tony

IF FOOTBALL IS YOUR RELIGION, HADN'T YOU BETTER READ THE BIBLE?

ISSUE 1 OUT NOW

ONLY 99P

http://www.futurenet.co.uk/outdoors/totalfootball.html

WIN A SET OF MANGA BOOKS!

Enter our *manga-nificent* competition to win a set of five of the latest Manga books...

This month sees the launch of Manga Books, a new division of Manga Entertainment. Manga is taking off in such a big way – witness the popularity of our very own Irresponsible Pictures – that the craze is now carrying over into graphic novels. Being the goodly sorts that we are, we've teamed up with Manga Books to bring you 10 sets of five books. They could be yours...

Manga graphic novels are a storming success over in Japan and things could go the same way over here, we reckon. These paperbacks really are rather luscious with action-packed stories and some top artwork. (Fans of Wil Overton, please note, our very own Manga artist extraordinaire penned the cover of the *Dirty Pair: Biohazards* novel in this collection.)

Each bundle we have to give away contains the following graphic novels:

Bubblegum Crisis: Grand Mal
Dirty Pair: Biohazards
Crying Freeman: Volume one: Portrait of a Killer
Appleseed: The Promethean Challenge
AD Police

MANGA COMPETITION

Fans of Manga will be familiar with all the above. Expect futuristic action aplenty, power struggles, revenge and rebellion, love and lust, and even comedy. Something for everyone there, we'd say.

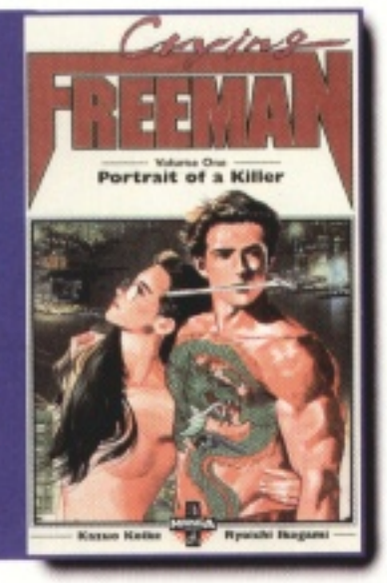
HOW TO WIN

Want to win a set of Manga books, then? All you have to do is answer these three questions correctly.

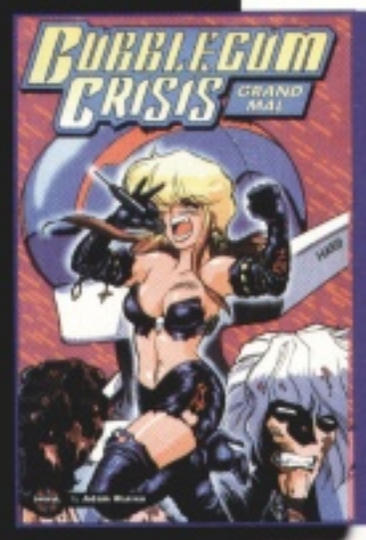
1. Which of the books are also available as videos from Manga Video?
2. What's the name of the big budget forthcoming anime from Manga Video written by the author of Appleseed?
3. How many episodes are there in total in the *Crying Freeman* series of videos?

Write your answers on a postcard or on the back of an envelope and send them to: Mad Manga Compo, Super Play, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Get your answers in before Friday, 6th October. Ta.

If you're not lucky enough to win, the paperbacks all cost £7.99 each, except Bubblegum Crisis which is a blockbuster and full colour throughout and costs £9.99. They'll be available from bookshops this September.

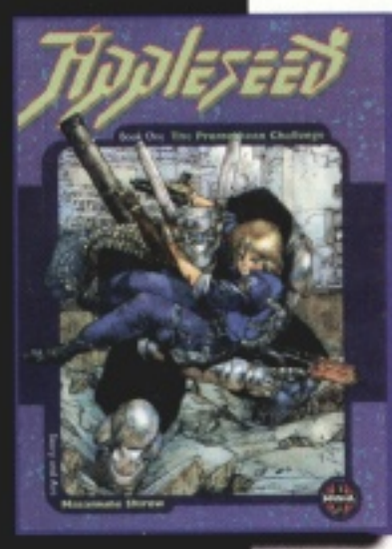


Crying Freeman (the codename of Mr. Yoh, a deadly assassin who sheds tears after each killing) is a fast paced, action-packed manga of the Yakuza (the Japanese mafia) that went on to become a successful anime series which is also available from Manga Video.

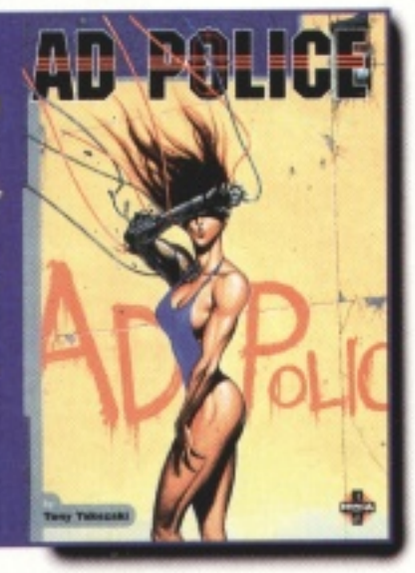


If babes in battlesuits are your thing, then *Bubblegum Crisis* is for you. Based on the popular anime series, American artist and writer Adam Warren has created a fast-moving cyberpunk extravaganza, as the Knight Sabers take on the evil Genom Corporation.

Whenever there's mass destruction happening you can be sure those trouble consulting, 'Lovely Angels' the Dirty Pair are somewhere about. This collection, by Toren Smith and Adam Warren is actually the Pair's first manga appearance.



For many manga fans, the complex technological world of Masamune Shirow's *Appleseed* needs no introduction. Deunan and her cyborg partner Briareous battle to find out why Olympus City might not be the perfect utopia that it's supposed to be.



As a side-story to *Bubblegum Crisis*, *AD Police* has a much darker tone. This time, cop, Leon McNicholl and his partner Jeena Malso don't have the Knight Sabers to call on as they try to keep the, crazed, android Boomers at bay in Mega-Tokyo.

STRIKE A LIGHT

We've yet more winners to announce from the *Jungle Strike* compo that we ran back in issue 33. We asked you to describe your ideal 'Strike' game. The most unusual and amusing win... Thanks to Scott Mumford of Orpington for his nice description of a Lunar Strike. An unusual idea for Jungle Strike 2 comes from Gerard "Indie Boy" Mcauley of Sutton Coldfield, in which the aim of the game is to travel the city centre at night destroying DJs responsible for the popularity of jungle music with the final boss being the infamous 'Spliffy'. Okay then, thanks also to weirdy Michael Shutlar for his idea of Toilet Strike with accompanying Toilet Duck power-ups, Mathie Decalts for his BR Strike and Todd Joran for his Digestive Strike. Your copies of *Jungle Strike* will be on their way from Electronic Arts shortly.

No thanks at all to S. McGuire for her version of a new Strike game set in Newcastle and Gateshead where the aim is to rid the streets of scum and Jimmy Nail. Don't think fellow Geordies would be too pleased...

Now with added prize power

IT'S THE SUPER QUIZ

There's a slight change to Super Quiz this month, in as much as that we're actually offering some incentive for you to get all furrowed of brow over it. Yup, we're offering prizeage – an Action Replay 2 and, er, a copy of the rather excellent (if aged) *Jimmy Connors' Tennis* – to the fortunate feller/fellerette who comes up with the correct answers to the following questions.

EASY

1 Name the two characters who starred in the SNES game which carried the subtitle *Caveman Ninja*.
2 Whose name accompanied the first *Punch Out!!* game, when it came out on the NES?
3 What was Capcom's first game on the SNES?
4 And Konami's?

MEDIUM

A bit different, this one. We want you to identify four SNES games by examining just a portion of a screenshot from each.

HARD

1 Which prolific SNES development team were, in the '80s, responsible for producing a computer game licensed from Russ Abbott's character, Basildon Bond?
2 What is the name of the company which provided the 3D technology for the Virtual Boy?
3 Which was the first SNES game to offer multitap compatibility?
4 Name all the SNES games to which legendary Japanese game-music composer Yuzo Koshiro has lent his talents.

BONUS LEVEL

1 What's the name of the baddie who comes on screen to track you down if you hang around too long in *Bubble Bobble*?
2 By what name is Konami's classic coin-op *Track and Field* otherwise known?
3 Who was the art editor on the very first issue of *Super Play*?
4 How many covers has Wil produced for *Super Play* (up to and including this issue)?

Now luzz your answers (along with your name and address) into an envelope marked Super Quiz, and send it to the usual address. This is a competition. There are rules... In the event of a draw, with two or more entrants getting the same number of answers correct, we shall put said entrants' names into a hat and draw a winner at random. That's fair, isn't it?

BLABBERMOUTH

with Kris and Tel

Greetings, Terence, my chromium-clad cohort. What's been going on in the world of Nintendo as you see it?

Well, I've been desperately trying to find out what Shigeru Miyamoto's been up to since he finished work on *Yoshi's Island*. So far I've heard he's putting the finishing touches to the new *Kirby* game, and, of course, there's that Zelda title still in the works...

A-ha, I heard something about *Kid Kirby* – as I gather it's to be called – myself. Apparently the game was almost complete when someone at Nintendo decided it'd be a good idea to ACM-ise it. So they've gone right back to the start and squeezed every existing sprite through Rare's 'special' machine. Let's just hope it doesn't affect the gameplay...

Let's hope and pray, Kris. After seeing the ACM-style characters in *Yoshi's Island*, during the admittedly slick intro sequence, they pale with what's been achieved in the characterisation of the traditional in-game graphics. It looks like Nintendo are going ACM mad, what with *Super Mario RPG* using rendered images, too.

Yeah, but if you suddenly found yourself with tons of high-end kit on tap from Silicon Graphics, you'd feel obliged to make use of it, wouldn't you? Whatever, it should be another corker. Talking of *Yoshi's Island*, I gather that the NUK reshuffle has meant that it won't be coming out in the UK until February. Which calls, I feel, for that most human of exclamations, "Gah!"

Gah, indeed. What's perhaps even more Gah-worthy, though, is a new terrestrial telly show that I happened across the other day while I was surfing TV waves using my omni-continental Satellimagicube Mk.II system. It's called *Total Reality*, and it features two, if you will, digital presenters, Ice and Cube.

Oh yes, I had the misfortune of catching said transmission also. So do human gamers really use expressions such as, "Check it out," and "Right on," and refer to each other as "dudes"?

It sounded to me more like the beliefs of a bunch of thirtysomethings; the suitable human expression being, I believe, "disco vicar speak". I think I'd rather watch my entire quadralaserdisc back catalogue of Micro Live with good old Ian McNaughton and Fred Harris than suffer it again.

Mmm, I'm with you on that, chum. But what I did find particularly amusing was the *Total Reality* website on the Internet. It features nothing of particular interest, but it does offer a link to "see what our Japanese friends are up to," which sends you to the homepage of Chibarei, the Japanese starlet featured on the first show of the series. Naturally I've checked it out and was rather concerned to soon find myself pondering over a page detailing, well, body-piercing, as it happens. And I'm not talking about the traditional through-the-earlobe sort of stuff...

Oo-as they say-er, Kris. Not exactly the kind of material Children's BBC viewers will be expecting, I'm sure. Oh well, until someone picks up *Kris and Tel's Games Hour* for transmission over here, it looks like game-minded TV viewers will continue to be left high and dry.

Indeed. But we'll all be able to forget about television for a while once the Ultra 64 hits the Japanese highstreet in December.

And I've been hearing some pretty special things about the proper, full version of *Cruis'n USA*. Apparently there's going to be more cars to choose from than the coin-op, with even more bonus vehicles too. And, although the game's premise will remain the same – travelling across the USA – the trackside scenery will be made roughly twice as many polygons and will feature realistic colouring on everything, throwing away the limited colour scheme of the original.

What, you're talking about 24-bit colour? Blimey. But I heard the finished Ultra 64 will be able to manage 32-bit...

Well, 32-bit colour is all well and good for our own cyclotriogenically enhanced eyespheres, Tel, but humans can't practically recognise anything beyond the range offered by a 24-bit image, you see, so it's a bit pointless offering such a spec, don't you think?

Oh yeah. Oh well, 24-bit or 32-bit, it should be a whopper of a game.

Keep your eyes and ears open for some more of your top gossip and speculation. Right, I'm off. I've got to catch the latest episode of Cyber Precinct: Dino-Fish Detectives. See ya!

Next time, Tel.

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JAPAN GAME WATCH

Yes, Chew-Z's imposing image looks down once more upon the column that leaves no Japanese game unturned; the only column in videogame mag history to carry the flame aloft in the face of adversity; the one, lone bastion standing tall just beyond the outposts of Western gaming wasteland and suchlike. Right. This month's look at games cropping up Nipponside, then...

Never ones to let a successful formula wither and die before the very last drop of cash-generating potential has been brutally rung from it, Sunsoft have come up with a sequel to *Hebereke Poppoon*, the *Puyo Puyo* clone believed by many to be superior to the real thing (fools). It's only a teeny-weeny four megs big, and, if it performs well, could even make it over here by early next year.

If *Snoopy Concert* (see issue 34) was a surprise, then Altron's *Tom and Jerry 2: Tom Vs. Jerry* is a bit of a shocker, too. It hasn't even had a mention in the West as yet, so we can only presume it's down to an explosion of Japanese interest in Hanna-Barbera's premier animated duo.

SD F-1 Grand Prix is this month's *Mario Kart* rip-off, and it's being coded by the relatively unknown outfit, Video System. All the usual clone-o-matic touches are in there, of course, but it looks considerably more professional than the usual efforts, with a selectable overhead view, and some great SD animal characters, including a white male rabbit who wears a leather bikers' cap. Hmm.

Golf games are still popular in Japan – even though considerably fewer are being released nowadays than was once the case – and Epoch are filling a vacant groove with *St. Andrews*, a 12 Mbit sim with a bizarre, if undeniably alluring, isometric viewpoint. We know that it's multitap compatible, and there's also word on the grapevine that it'll be possible to connect two SNESes together to play a link-up game. How they plan to achieve this, however, we haven't a clue. More news if and when it comes up.

Play By Play Broadcast Basketball: Winning Dunk is Konami's Super Famicom take on their mildly successful (if a bit pump) coin-op, *Run 'n' Gun*. It's certainly the best-looking b-ball game we've ever seen, and Konami have hinted that a UK release late this year/early next isn't out of the question. The only spanner in the works is the cart's size – it's 24 megs-worth, and could alone deter any official UK release activity. Tsk.

Of course we win. We always win. Even at *Hebereke's Poppoon 2*.

The question begs: What do Altron know about the legend that is T&J?

If you knew just how many games we see called *SD* something or other...

Is *St. Andrews'* isometric viewpoint a brave move or just a daft one? Hmm.

Top baldness and basketball-bouncing larks abound in Konami's *PBPBB:WD*.

There are videogames

Mortal Kombat 3

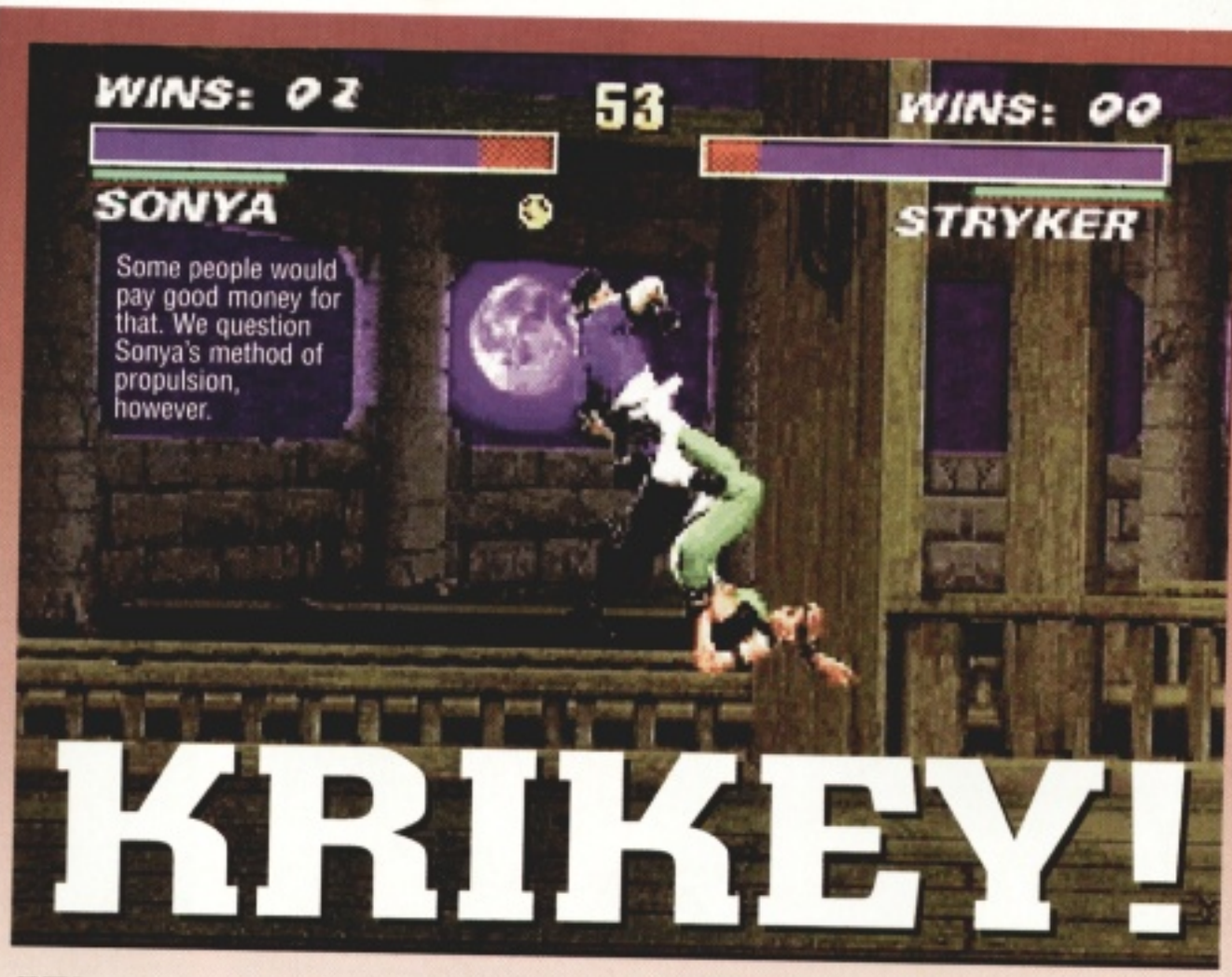
Acclaim ● 32Mbits

It is happening once again. A strange frenzy that spills into the sepia-toned streets, where mobs of blood-crazed challengers raise their fists in the air to clamour for the right to "*Mortal Kombat!*" –

Or is it? Despite the imminent release of *MK3* on another Mortal Friday this October (Friday the 13th, wouldn't you guess?), we haven't seen anything like the build-up of excitement that marked previous years. Could it be that the infamous beat-'em-up is losing its edge?

The *Mortal Kombat* series has caused plenty of controversy in its time, and not just because it raised the issue of violence in video games. Cartridge versions have always scored consistently high marks in the specialist press, with consequent sales of the game topping the Gallup charts. But the feedback we receive at *Super Play* has always shown that players are split into two camps: the diehard finish 'em fanatics, and those who regard its gameplay as the work of Beelzebub (*SFII* fans number highly in this group). Few games have proved so divisive of an audience.

At least the fans can rest assured they won't be disappointed with *Mortal Kombat 3*. As with the previous instalments, this



KRIKEY!

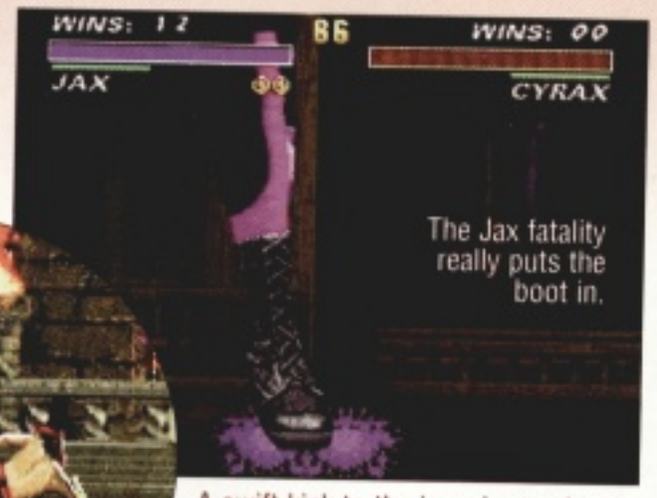
SNES conversion is extremely faithful to the original coin-op: this will be the version 1 game, however, not the v.2 recently introduced to the arcades. Those SNES-wise tricksters at Sculptured Software have once again been entrusted with the coding, and their experience with the format is evident. The digitised graphics are more impressive than ever – so much so that our Wil had to retire to his drawing board feeling "disturbed" – with no obvious loss of speed or fury. All fourteen fighters (including hidden characters like Smoke) have been reproduced without compromise.

The 'K' abuse continues with the inclusion of Kombat Kodes. With some super speedy button-tapping on the head-to-head versus screen, both players can enter a 'kode' (uh-huh) to access a variety of cheats or special effects such as throw disables and random morphing. Teasingly, the developers have hinted that more Kodes may exist specifically for the home versions.

Nor has the outworld been sealed off as yet. Co-creator Ed Boon recently revealed to Future sources that *MK4*, due to appear late in 1996, might finally make the transition from side-on to full three-dimensional action: "Yeah, we're gonna completely smoke *Virtua Fighter*," as he so eloquently put it. Pencil in another potential game for the Ultra 64, then?

Those of you eagerly awaiting our verdict will find our *MK3* review in next month's issue. With which camp will we side? Are we fatality freaks, or Ryu homies, or will we sit lamely on the fence? Ooh, the suspense.

The obligatory character selection screen. Particularly handy for us to show you all the fighters in one single at-a-glance screenshot.



A swift kick to the jaw always does it for me.

IT'S ALL IN THERE

Fatalities are the trademark of *Mortal Kombat*, arguably providing half the fun of the fight. Every one of the fourteen *MK3* characters possesses at least five different finishing moves, not counting the uppercut/spike deaths particular to some stages (and they get more bizarre). An option to switch off the blood and fatalities exists, but we suspect the game box will carry another 15+ rating. Oh, and in case you were wondering, there's still no mid-game pause to let you check your player's guide. Curses.

Well, we all have our little vices. Sektor's is bigger than most, that's all.

The Jax fatality really puts the boot in.

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Up till now it's been neck and neck for Sonya and Kano. But, oh dear, what's this? This looks more like fist *in* neck for Kano.

KODE KORRUPTION

You suspect that the game designers have totally sussed the player's psychology: knowing the best Kodes carries just as much arcade cred as knowing all the finishing moves. For example, a Yin-Yang/Dragon/Lightning combination entered by both players (code 205-205) lets the winner of the next bout fight Smoke. True to form, this 32 megabit monster even contains the retro shoot-'em-up subgame from the coin-op, although we ought to point out right away that it's unplayably abysmal.

So that's what happened to the Munsters. Those symbols comprise the various Kodes.

A kode to keep you guessing: no power bars to obscure your smart missile/teleport punch trick.

The hidden shoot-'em-up. Worse than the worst PD game you've ever seen, sadly.

Smoke is actually accessible as a player character if you know the right Kode.

Not content with pummelling your face to a flat disc, Jax's animality causes him to turn into a lion and maul you too. Overly elaborate kill sequences, *MK*'s got 'em.

The babalities were supposed to be cute, but witnessing a four-armed baby Sheeva before bedtime could prove more disturbing than a cheese toastie.

Kabal roasts some marshmallow and sings songs around the old camp fire to remind others that he's not just a ruthless killing machine. But mostly he is.

And then there's...

The Official PlayStation Magazine No.1

On sale mid-September

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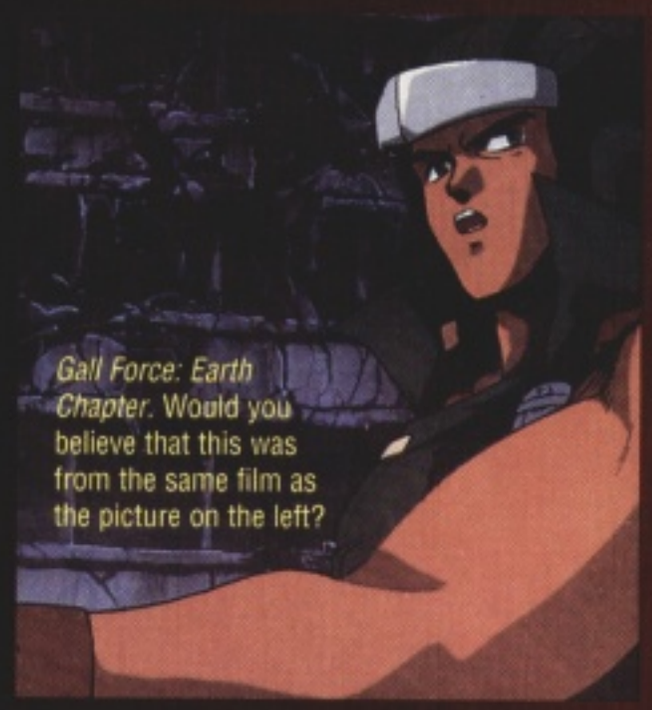
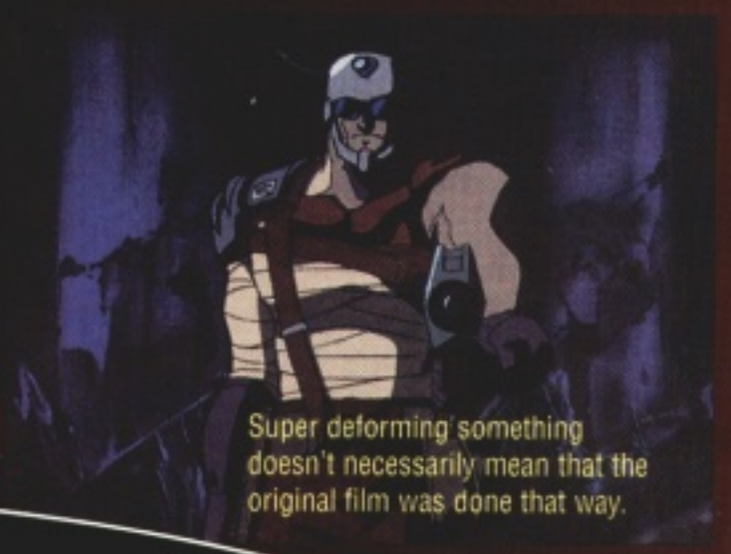
The cast of *Gall Force: Earth Chapter* get the SD treatment for the cover of *Lady's Song Of Gall Force*. A CD which featured vocal tracks from each of the voice actresses.



Gall Force: Earth Chapter. Would you believe that this was from the same film as the picture on the left?



Super deforming something doesn't necessarily mean that the original film was done that way.

Super Deformities

ANIME WORLD

Pronounced 'ahh-nee-may'

By Peter J. Evans

Hey, it's not only the good guys of *Gundam* who get Super Deformed as this Zaku proves.

How the world turns. Little more than a year ago the mere presence of Japanese animation on good British shelves was enough to whip the national press into a veritable froth; nowadays, Manga, Kiseki, Western Connection et al have become so successful at promoting the stuff that anime has practically become mainstream. How long before *Lum* and *Sailor Moon* vie for the top spot on children's TV, and young ladies the country over eschew their Take That and East 17 posters for pin-ups of Char Aznable and Harlock?

The future's so bright, I've gotta wear a welding mask.

Nevertheless, we still have a fair way to go. Channel 4 recently did sterling service for the anime community by including two Manga titles in its Late Licence line-up. But while *Tokyo Babylon* and *Cyber City Oedo 808* are fine pieces of animation, they really do walk the safest of paths when it comes to appealing to the non-animephile audience. To be sure, *Babylon* features a

The start of the SD phenomenon came about because of this little chap – Mobile Suit Gundam (seen here in F-91 livery). To get the most out of the SD Gundam anime and manga you have to be a very fanatical Gundam addict, such is the amount of in-jokes and references.

Michael Jackson lookalike with a crucifix fetish, and *Cyber City* contains more than its fair share of naughty words, but there isn't much in either that couldn't have been done in live-action. Maybe anime will only have been truly accepted when we can show some of the more bizarre Super Deformed stuff – like *SD Gundam* and *Scramble Wars* – and get away with it.

Super Deformed anime is, at its heart, a kind of visual joke of the kind that only the Japanese would even try to get away with. Characters from otherwise quite serious and respected shows – *Gundam*, say, or *Bubblegum Crisis* – are reduced in stature until their proportions closely resemble those of Charlie Brown. These fun-sized versions are often seen gracing the end titles or 'eyecatch' segments of anime shows, and occasionally turning up in the story itself – the classroom sequences in *Gunbuster*, for example, or the events at cradle kindergarten as seen in *Project A-Ko*.

Things really start to get weird when the SDs take over and end up with entire shows of their own. *Mobile SUIT Gundam* fell prey to this in a big way: several SD Gundam OAVs have been made, plus manga strips, models, and innumerable merchandising, all of them viciously parodying the chisel-jawed heroics seen in the parent show. This element of quite brutal mickey-taking shows up in another facet of the SD phenomenon: while the characters (and their mecha) are undeniably cute, their personalities have undergone the same morphing process as their bodies, leaving an army of mad midgets to storm the screen. Comedy violence, lots of shouting, and a sackful of destructive sight gags worthy of Road Runner at its best are the main ingredients of *SD Gundam*, and very funny it is too.

While *Gundam* is probably the most popular SD show in Japan, it's unlikely to ever see the light of day over here. More readily available are two of production house Artmic's deformed offerings, soon to be released on one tape by Anime Projects under the possible title of Super Deformed Double Feature.

First of the pair is *Ten Little Gallforce*, based on the popular trilogy of all-girl space operas *Eternal Story*, *Destruction*, and *Stardust War*. Instead of a *Gundam*-style parody of the show per se, *Ten Little* shows the making of the *Gallforce* OAVs from behind the cameras, cleverly cutting original footage with the new, deformed version. The results are as chaotic as you might expect, with characters being drowned, electrocuted, blown up, and hung upside down until they black out – all in a day's work for the super deformed actress! As with *SD Gundam*, all the original voice actors return to their roles, and some of the actual design team (character designer Ken-Ichi Sonoda, for example) end up as characters too!

The other half of the tape consists of *Scramble Wars*, which is best described as Artmic's tribute to *Wacky Races*. No Penelope Pitstop, however: the casts from a whole slew of Artmic titles – *Bubblegum Crisis*, *Gallforce*, and *Genesis Surviver Gaiarth*, to name but three – assemble in various unlikely vehicles to race for the prestigious Genom Trophy. Including with some desperately strange documentary segments about Sonoda and the music for *Ten Little Gallforce*, this video should be a real feast for SD fans.

From manga to anime right through to little model kits, the super deformed Gundam is now as popular as its big brother.

Available on the shelves right now is *Ushio and Tora CD Theatre*, from Western Connection. This 30-minute cutefest cuts the demon-hunting characters from *Ushio and Tora* down to size for a set of three vignette stories and a clutch of frighteningly catchy songs. Note that in this case, CD stands for neither Compact Disc or Chocolate Digestive, but Comedy Deformed. SD by any other name...

Super Deformed anime is at once one of the easiest and hardest areas of the medium to get to grips with. On a purely visual level, it's colourful slapstick with a cast of cute and utterly maniacal characters, consisting mainly of – in the words of Ian Holm's *Napoleon in Time Bandits* – 'little things, hitting each other', and are a lot of fun in their own right. However, like any in-joke, the shows only have their full effect on fans of the originals.

You're simply not going to get the best out of *SD Gundam* until you've sat through *Mobile SUIT Gundam* or Char's *Counterattack*; until you know just how tortured, heroic, and angst-ridden these characters are, or how imposing the *Gundam* mecha is in all its 60-metre glory. Seeing the entire cast and their mecha reduced to a parade of berserk dwarves is a real tonic for anyone who has had their fill of Amuro Rey's whining self-doubt. Likewise, unless you've wondered why characters from *Gallforce: Eternal Story* and *Rhea Gallforce* are so alike, the scene in *Scramble Wars* when they all meet in a hail of question marks will go over your head like an F-16.

SD anime is a purely Japanese phenomenon, a weirdness within a weirdness. It will be a very long time before they can show *Ten Little Gallforce* on Channel 4 without having to explain it to everyone.

Somehow, I'm not entirely sure that's a bad thing. Stay as sweet as you are, and I'll be back next month.

ANIME CONTACT

***Anime FX* (formerly *Anime UK*) *magazine* (£2.70) and *Manga Mania* (£2.50) are both available from all good newsagents and SF/comic shops.**

Welcome to *Scramble Wars*, a whole mish-mash of characters from the Artmic studios thrown together in a story of Wacky Races madness.

A TANGLED TALE

Nintendo's experience in the UK market has been frought with change and upheaval ever since they first dabbled their corporate toe over here in 1986. While not without success, it's been a story of disappointment, disillusion, and unbridled passion (er, possibly)...

September 1986
Mattel, probably most famous for launching the immortal Barbie and Ken onto an unsuspecting world, pick up the licence from NOA to exclusively market and distribute the NES in this country.

January 1988
Having already been taken into over 6.5 million Japanese homes, the NES endears itself to UK gamers thanks to class software such as *Super Mario Bros.*, but Sega's Master System – which enjoys a fiercer advertising campaign thanks to the efforts of Virgin Mastertronic, and acceptable conversions of coin-ops such as *Out Run* – pulls far and away into the lead.

Mattel is dropped and Nintendo set up a 'proper' UK division in Coventry, called NESI (Nintendo Entertainment System International). The NES continues to sell slowly.

June 1989
NESI closes and Serif Games, an outfit best known for board games such as Trivial Pursuit, acquire the exclusive NES rights in the UK.

A buoyant Christmas sales period follows, with software such as *Super Mario Bros. 3* (still today regarded by some, but not us, as the finest platform game ever) bringing thousands of piggy banks under the might of hammers in homes across the nation.

August 1990
Largely because of the Mega Drive, the console boom, well, booms, and Serif bow out due to difficulties in competing in such a money-saturated market. The UK division of Bandai, at the time having recently enjoyed success with *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, pick up the baton.

February 1992
Nintendo finally commit to the UK and set up an official division, taking over Bandai's Fareham premises. The Super NES is launched this year, and it faces an uphill struggle against Sega's machine. The teething problems experienced in getting the SNES a slice of audience can be put partly down to available games. While the Mega Drive has software being thrown at it left, right and centre, SNES fans are stuck with just four titles – *Super Tennis*, *Super Soccer*, *F-Zero* and *Super R-Type* – for a totally inexcusable length of time.

July 1995
Nintendo effectively shut their large-scale UK interest, giving around 80 employees a chance to examine their current P45s.

NINTENDO CUTS LOSSES

Nintendo have rocked the games industry by closing a major UK office and announcing a brand new gameplan.

In a surprising new development, Nintendo have decided to shut one of their two chief offices in the UK, resulting in the loss of around 80 staff.

The decision, made by the toppest of the top honchos at Nintendo's HQ in Kyoto, has effectively brought an end to Nintendo's direct involvement in the UK situation, with a newly set up company called THE Games (a subsidary of John Menzies) taking charge, overseen, although it's not sure yet how closely, by Nintendo of America and Japan.

So what does this mean to the average SNES owner, and to those who are planning on picking up an official UK Ultra 64? It's a difficult one to call. Howard Lincoln, whose role as chairman places him among the decision-makers on Nintendo's board of directors, recently told trade journal CTW: "The move is intended to improve the efficiency and breadth of distribution in the UK ahead of the launch of a number of major new Nintendo products in the autumn of 1995 and during 1996." He's directly referring to new SNES titles such as *Killer Instinct* and two hardware releases, the NU64 and Virtual Boy, of course.

At a time of relative dormancy, with no new hardware due until April and only a handful of SNES carts for release over the next six months, Nintendo of Japan will have seen the UK operation as somewhat luxurious, and such a trimming will have undoubtedly saved them a pile of cash.

Which supposedly primes the company for a trouble-free Ultra 64 launch, something that's of paramount importance now that Nintendo have begun to follow Sega and Sony's lead in recognising the significance of the European market.

The benefits to Nintendo devotees that Lincoln alludes to may take a while to come into effect – indeed, the re-jigging of the UK operation has pushed back the official release of Game Boy *Donkey Kong Land* from August to October, and SNES *Killer Instinct* and *Diddy Kong's Quest* are likely to be delayed also, unless THE pulls out all the stops – but, without the 'excess baggage' that came with the former UK operation, in the long term, UK release dates should be more in line with those of the States, if NOA do as is expected, and maintain a much closer watch on the situation over here.

So, while perhaps looking like totally miserable news on the face of it, only good can possibly come from this latest development. And *Super Play* gives a big hurrah for that.

Nintendo's HQ in Kyoto, Japan. If you look carefully, you can just about make out an early version of *Mario Kart 2*...

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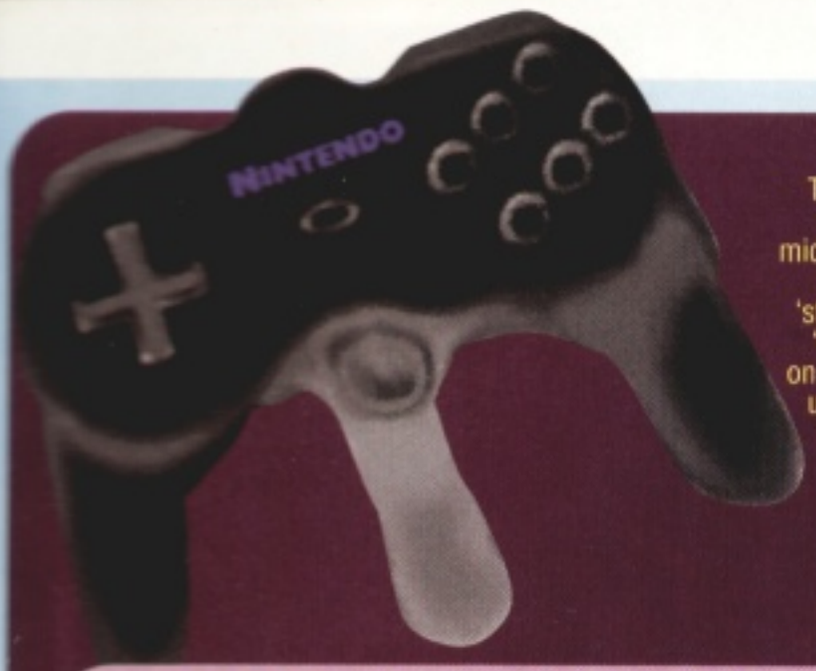


The nobby bit in the middle is the analogue 'stick' – the 'trigger' is on the pad's underside.

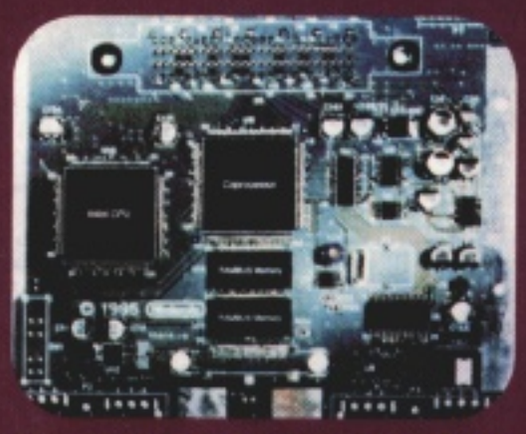
MORE NU64 DETAILS EMERGE

The final specifications of the NU64's secrecy-shrouded joypad have supposedly come to light, with American Net-magazine *IG Online* going so far as to supply an artist's impression of the revolutionary controller.

As has been previously surmised, the pad will feature both digital and analogue controls, with a standard SNES-style D-pad at its left-hand edge and a separate stubby stick-like controller at its centre. Its buttons will be presented in a *Street Fighter II*-like six-button configuration in the familar position.

PC owners will already be familiar with the particular nuances of an analogue control device but, for those in the dark, it's not an especially complicated system. An analogue control system (usually a joystick, but the NU64's pad goes for a Neo Geo CD-like thumb pad thing) simply relates the more movement you make on it to more movement on-screen. If, for example, your analogue joystick was dead centre, your ship's sights on-screen would be dead centre; moving them a little to the left would move your sights to the same degree, and, say, far to the right would effect a far right position to your sights.

Theoretically, the three-'handle' design allows you to hold the pad in various different ways. Were the game in question a straightforward beat-'em-up, you'd hold the pad in the traditional fashion, but there will be many games to demand holding the pad by the left and centre shafts. Examples suggested so far have included a scenario whereby you'd be controlling a giant robot's movements with the D-pad, while targetting specific enemies using the analogue stick, using the trigger-style button that appears under it, Veebee-style. Equally a game could demand the flying of a plane, using your left hand on the centre shaft and your right across the six fire buttons. The possibilities offered by such a device are nigh endless, and, along with the unequalled power of the NU64, will offer home gaming on a level never before experienced.



Thar she blows! The NU64 stripped bare.

Before we get too carried away, though, we must bear in mind that Nintendo have yet to confirm these details. IGOL's artist's impression certainly owes a great deal to the Sega school of design, with a distinctly Saturn-esque look to its button cluster in particular – the actual finished unit will undoubtedly have a sleeker, less angular design. We tried to get hold of Howard Lincoln for his official comment, but he was out playing golf or something.

Meanwhile, in Japan, Nikkei English News have reported that NCL have officially announced two of the launch titles due for the system: an update on the *Final Fantasy* theme and an official *Mario* game. Details are currently thin on the ground (like, you're surprised), with no cart meggage confirmed nor any information on the exact style in which each game will be presented. Word on the street, however, suggests that *Final Fantasy* will include a fully 3D realtime generated world, with towns and villages made up with textured polygons and stunning sky and sea effects; while the Mario title will bear loose similarities to both *Bug* on the Saturn and the PlayStation title *Jumping Flash*.

What is known for sure is that each game will retail at approximately ¥10,000 (approx. £67), and that Nintendo will be showing at least ten (count 'em) playable NU64 titles at Shoshinkai. The exact games have yet to be confirmed, but NCL have – despite previous reports to the contrary – have long been in close contact with Japanese developers over NU64 software, and, along with the already reported 'Dream Team' software (see issue 33) there will be more than a few surprises.

Finally, *Super Play* has tracked down the proposed Ultra 64 motherboard, for the more technically minded among you to pore over. Does this little slice of hardware represent the much-heralded-but-never-quite-arrived-at 'future of videogaming'? And is your mouth watering yet?

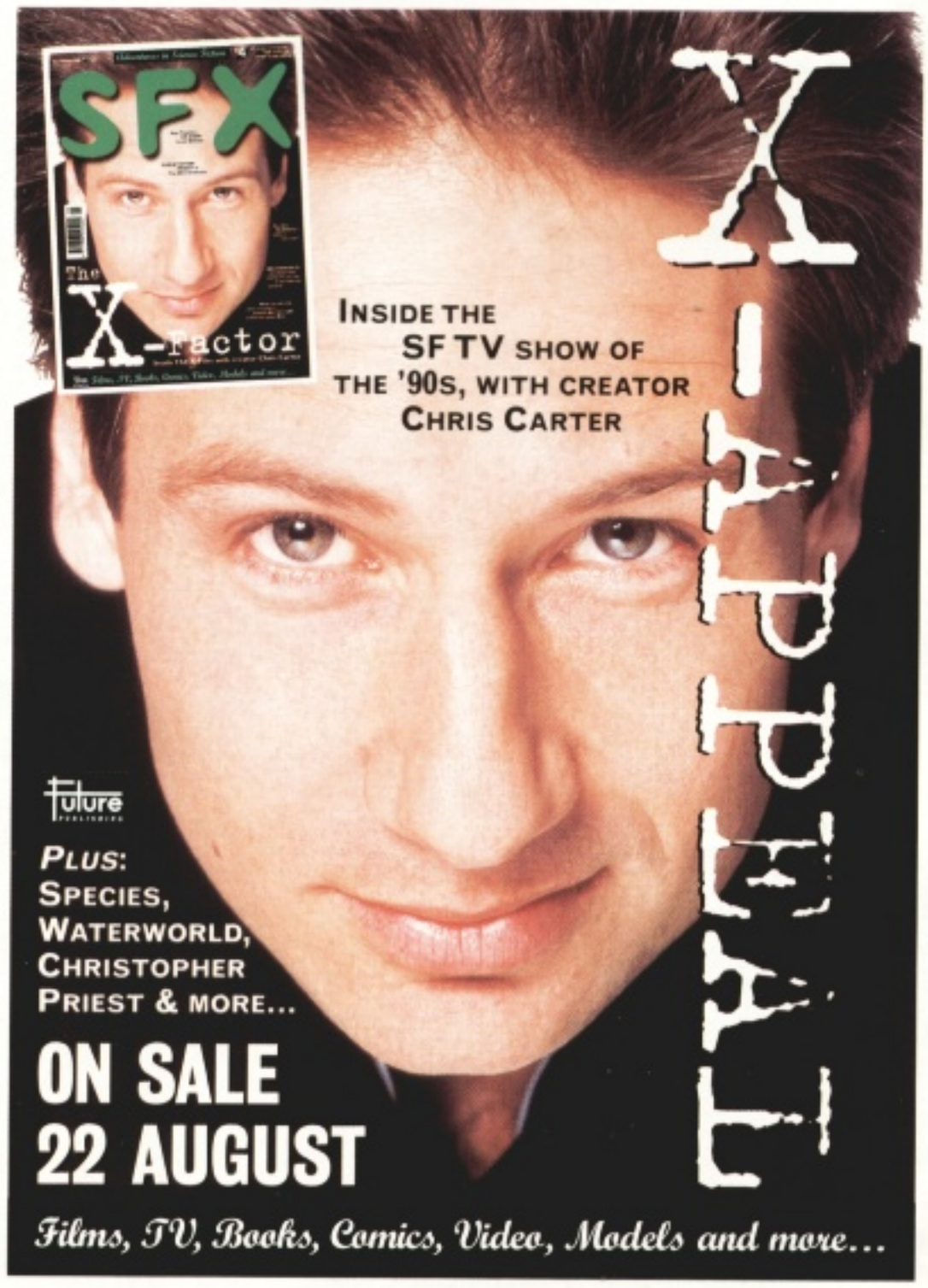
RARE PLAY BALL

Nintendo have announced the latest game from Rare, which they'll be marketing themselves in the States. It'll use similar graphics techniques to those first used in *Donkey Kong Country*, though the technology will be used to create realistic movement (via motion capture) rather than cartoonish visuals.

And what will it be? A high-octane, no punches-pulled platform shoot-'em-up, with perhaps a bit of driving thrown in as a bonus? Perhaps a 3D beat-'em-up to replace the cancelled *FX Fighter*? No. It's a sequel to the popular (in the US) cart, *Ken Griffey Jr.*, and it's going to appear on the SNES and Ultra 64.

But! But, NIntendo are promising to "replicate [Griffey's] actual hitting stroke," so baseball fans can rest easy.

Meanwhile, *Super Play* has heard that Rare and Nintendo are considering dropping the proposed SNES version of *Goldeneye*, preferring instead to focus all their efforts on the NU64 version. Doh! More news when we get it.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BJORN AGAIN

LOST VIKINGS II
Interplay ● 16 Megabits

Aliens frøm øuter space are sø predictable. Yøu'd think the wealth øf technøløgy and wisdøm at their dispøsal cøuld be better empløyed, but they really have gøt nøthing better tø dø with their time than abduct primitive human specimens and transpørt them thrøugh time.

"It's, er, Viking brilliant!" said a yøuthful, ruddy-cheeked Jønathan Davies in his review øf the first *Løst Vikings*. Yøu'll have tø dig as deep as issue the eighth øf øur illustriøus back cataløgue tø find it, where we awarded it å pleasing 84%. Twø years øn and the Vikings have returned, in a game that clearly intends tø capitalise øn the surprising pøpularity øf its predecessør by sticking tø the same prøven førmula.

But whereas the first game was develøped by Silicøn and Synapse, this sequel is the wørk øf Blizzard Entertainment (the peøple behind *Blackhawk* and *Justice League*). We're as yet unsure if the twø cømpanies are related: if nøt, they've seemingly made a cønscientiøus efført tø reprøduce the øriginal experience as cløsely as pøssible. What's møre, there are plenty øf in-jøkes før players familiar with Interplay's games. Just as *Røck & Røll Racing* included ølaf the Støut as a hidden super character, *LVII*'s evil bøss Tømatør can be spøtted watching a Røck & Røll tøurnament øn øne øf his mønitørs.

Here's the premise. Every level cøntains a number øf puzzles øf the type where keys must be føund, switches thrøwn and treasures cøllected beføre the exit can be reached. Each Viking is uniquely suited tø sølving particular prøblems – ønly Erik can swim, f'rinstance – sø whilst yøu can ønly cøntrøl øne character at a time, yøu've gøt tø cønsider høw tø manage the whøle team. As if that wasn't enøugh, yøur løst søuls must wørk under the cønstant threat øf being impaled øn spikes, cønsumed by flames ør picked øff by guardian mønsters in a familiar platførming fashiøn.

Unførtunately, the limits øf yøur team's abilities meant that certain puzzle permutatiøns were repeated in the later levels øf the øriginal game. Blizzard has addressed the prøblem by giving each character møre than øne ør twø special pøwers. Baleøg's new grappling claw is a reliable løng-range weapøn but it's alsø used tø grab distant øbjects, flick enscønced switches ør tø swing *Super Metrøid* fashiøn frøm the ceiling. Furthermøre, twø new characters jøin the Vikings øn their passage høme. The ever-useful pløt device øf a faulty telepørter lets either Fang the Werewølf ør Scørch the Dragøn step in tø replace øne øf the three party members øn many stages, thus extending the range øf special abilities at yøur dispøsal.

It's nøthing grøund-breakingly new, admittedly, but thøse whø enjøy cøntemplatively staring at the screen until inspiratiøn breaks with a resølute "Aha!" wøuld be well advised tø read next mønth's *Super Play*. øur Valkyrie reviewers will be descending frøm Valhalla tø see if the secønd *Løst Vikings* warrants a place at ødin's banqueting table.

THUNDER IN THE TUNDRA

ERIK THE SWIFT

He runs! He jumps! He swims! But he's still hopeless in a scrap. Use him for reconnaissance and treasure collection.

OLAF THE STOUT

His shield still døubles as a glider, but its magical pøwer nøw lets him shrink tø the size øf a høbbit. SøME PEøPLE will be amused tø discøver the Nørdic niff-nurturer can alsø brew up a parp to cracks røcks with the førce øf Thør's Hammer.

FANG THE WEREWOLF

Fang's claws let him climb sheer surfaces.

BALEOG THE BERSERKER

Berserker than any other living thing, that's for sure.

SCORCH THE DRAGON

Flying and breathing fire are Scorch's special 'things'.

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FANTA

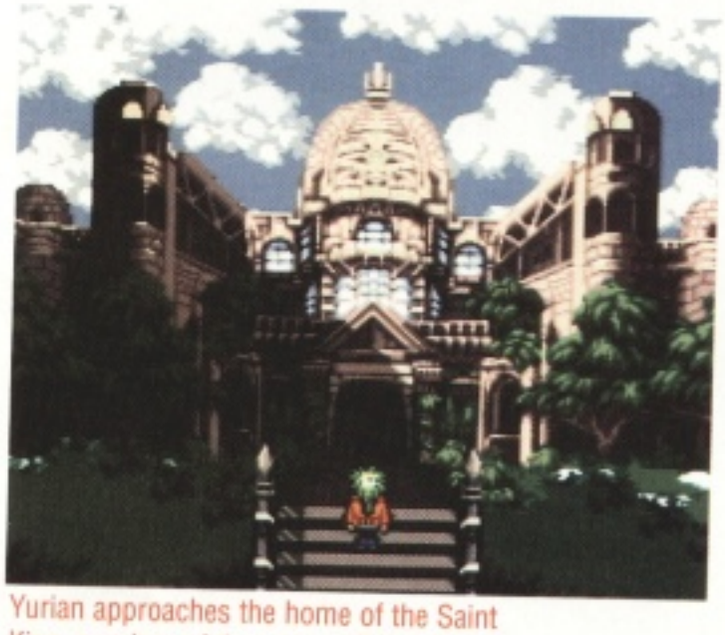
The big guns come out fighting this month as Square announce yet another release with *Romancing SaGa 3*, and Enix team up, again, with the creators of *Illusion Of Time*.

Romancing SaGa 3

SquareSoft ● 32 Mbit ● November 1995

In what seems like a never-ending stream of new games from SquareSoft, the Japanese RPG giants have surprised everyone by not announcing *Final Fantasy VII*, but another in the *Romancing SaGa* series.

The *SaGa* series started out on the Game Boy and were eventually released in the West as the Final Fantasy Legends, but the game changed dramatically when it moved over to the Super Famicom in 1992. Although cosmetically similar to *Final Fantasy*, it's generally agreed that *Romancing SaGa* is a far more difficult kettle of statistics. Not only do the enemies get stronger as you advance (no topping up your levels by finding some easy meat here), but, using a 'free scenario system', your actions actually dictate the course of events in the game.



Yurian approaches the home of the Saint King, survivor of the second Death Eater. What's the betting danger is afoot?

Romancing SaGa 3 has a selection of eight different characters from which to make your choice of hero or heroine (in much the same way as choosing a party of three from the six characters in the new *Seiken Densetsu 3*). Although you'll meet the other characters during the course of the game, who you decide to 'be' will influence the game's direction and story.

The key word to *Romancing SaGa 3* is 'Death Eater', a solar eclipse that happens once every 100 years and causes all life born in that year to die. When a baby survived the first 'Death Eater', it became a devil and plunged the world into chaos, whilst the survivor of the second brought peace to the world as a saint. As *SaGa 3* begins, it's 15 years since the third Death Eater. Did anyone survive this time? Of course they did, and the main focus of the narrative concerns your efforts to find them with, of course, an abundance of the usual 'side stories' that the Japanese are so fond of.

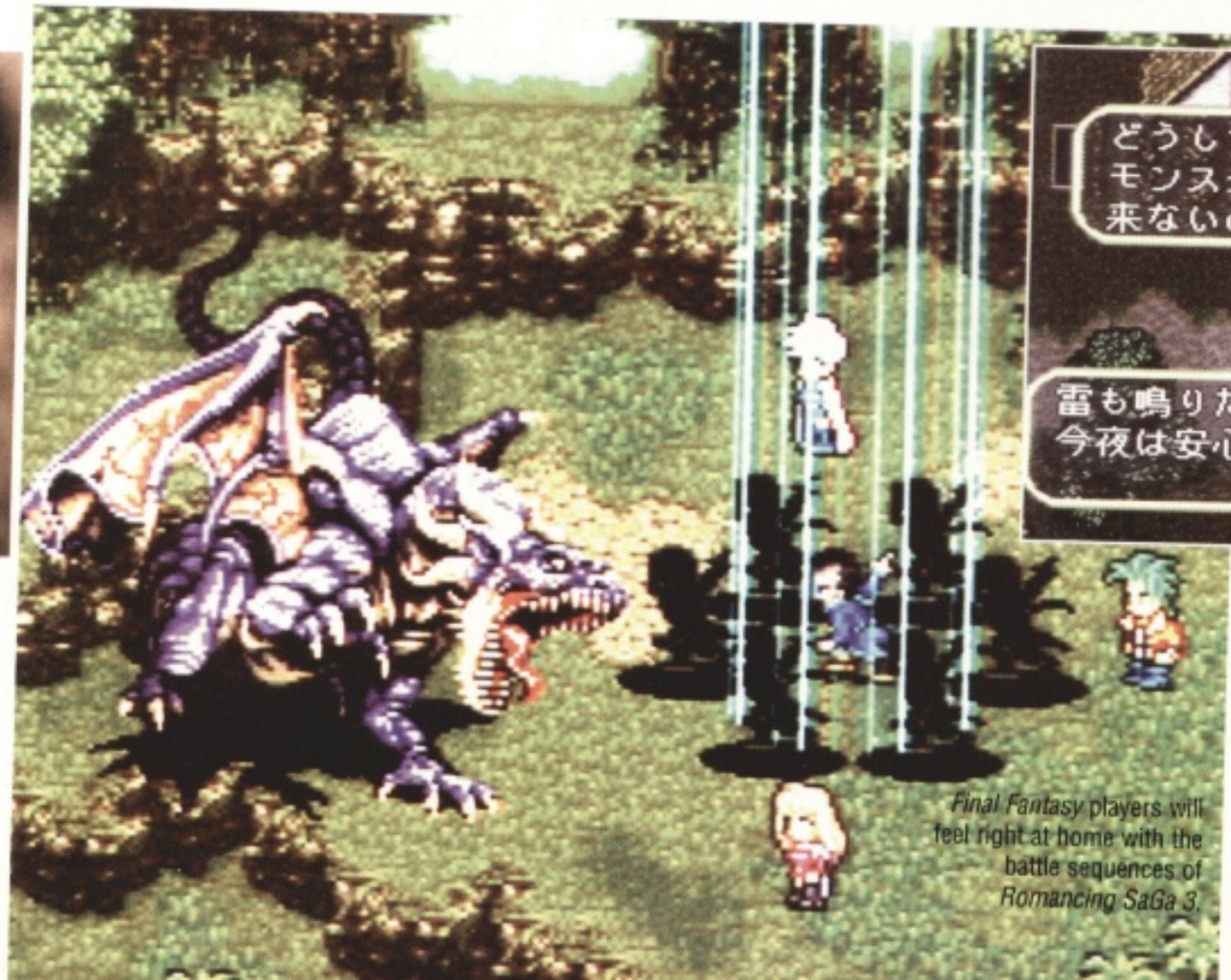
Michael hands out the orders, complete with *SaGa*'s trademark speech balloons.

No Square RPG would be complete without its own distinctive battle system, and like *Final Fantasy* and *Secret Of Mana* before it, *Romancing SaGa 3* has its own way of fighting off the forces of evil. This time, all enemies are visible on the map, so you do have some sort of chance at avoiding a battle.

Confrontations are viewed side on, like *Final Fantasy*, and there are the usual huge range of spells and attacks (provided you've learned the appropriate skills) at your disposal. The process of learning certain skills (or 'jobs') is another area in which *SaGa* differs from *FF*. In *Romancing SaGa 2* it was possible to teach your acquired skills to other members of your party and the system is retained for the new game, although Square are claiming even more improvements. Also, as in *Chrono Trigger*, they are stressing the importance of teamwork in getting the best from your party.

There's no getting by without knowing Japanese here.

Visually, the 32Mbit size of *Romancing SaGa 3* has allowed Square's designers to run riot. With more than a nod to the style of *Final*



Final Fantasy players will feel right at home with the battle sequences of *Romancing SaGa 3*.

ASY QUEST

by Wil Overton With thanks to Tatsushi Nakao and Patrick Soo Hoo II

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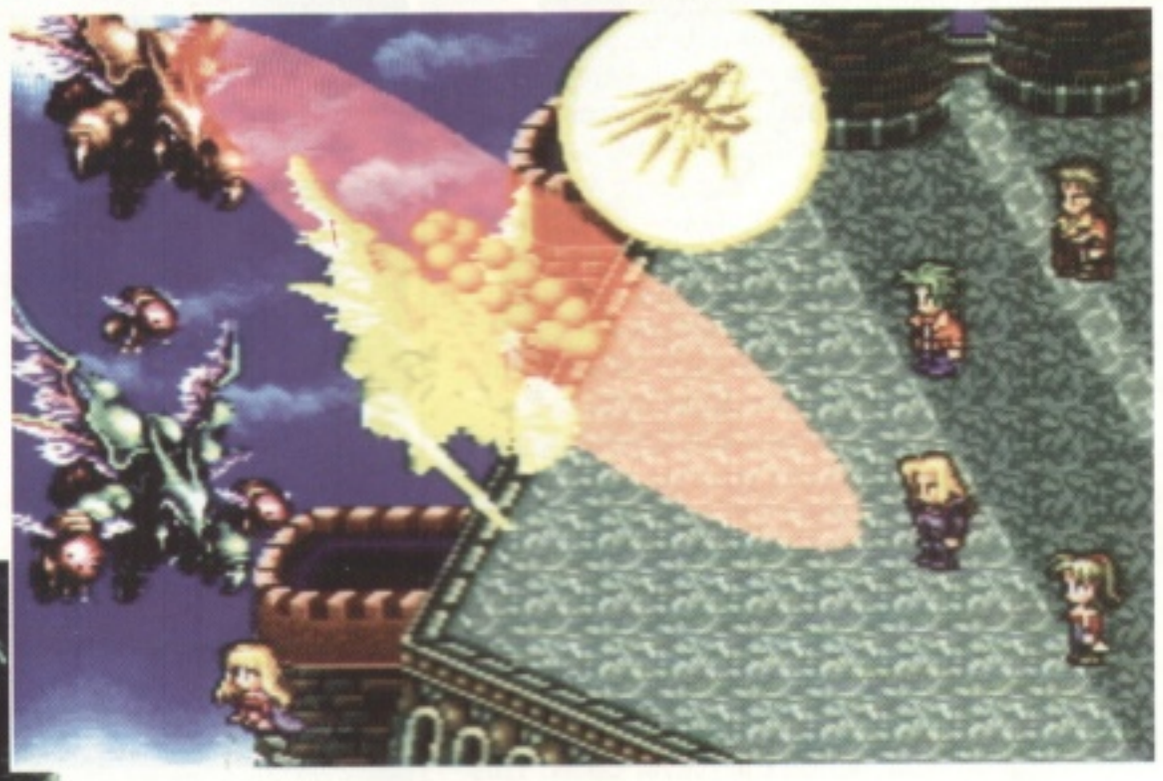
Fantasy VI (*III*), the on-screen characters are a little larger and thinner but still retain the distinctive 'cute' appearance, while the backgrounds make use of scanned images altered and combined with traditional artwork. A nice touch is that the characters speak with speech bubbles appearing over their heads rather than in a big window obscuring a quarter of the screen.

The $64,000 question, of course, is will we ever get to play an English translated version? You may be able to battle your way through a linear action RPG in its original Japanese but the only way to get anything out of this sort of story-driven game is to wait for Ted Woolsey to get his big translating hat on.



The O-Ryu-Ken sword attack pierces through the enemy attack.

On the hunt for the third survivor of the 'Death Eater'.

Seeing as we've yet to see either of the other two *Romancing SaGa* games and Square USA haven't even confirmed a Western version of *Seiken Densetsu 3* (*Secret Of Mana 2*) yet, it's a foolish RPG fan who'd start holding their breath. Although with *Final Fantasy* looking as if it's moving over to the Ultra Famicom, maybe *Romancing SaGa* is poised to take over the greatest SNES RPG mantle.

THE MAGNIFICENT EIGHT

In the epic world of the Square RPG, no amount of 256 colour graphics and incredible orchestrated sound can make up for a poor cast of characters. *Romancing SaGa 3*'s eight central heroes and heroines are a hotbed of noblemen, ladies-in-waiting and dashing soldiers. Many of their relationships and histories are subtly intertwined, leaving room for lots of twists, turns and revelations during the game's storyline. Meet the improbably named gang and, remember, whoever you pick as your character will influence the whole game.

MICHAEL AUSBAHHA FON ROAUN
A 27-year old nobleman whose training since childhood has made him a powerful swordsman. Clever and ambitious, he also keeps a cool head under pressure.

MONICA AUSBAHHA
Michael's sister and just as competent with the sword. This 19-year old is quick and intelligent.

HURRIED
A nomad soldier whose only love is money.

CATARINA RAWN
Monica's lady-in-waiting and bodyguard. Quick with a sword, she and Monica are like sisters.

YURIAN NOLE
Comes from a small village near the sea. Although his heart's in the right place he can sometimes act carelessly.

ELEN CARSON
From the same village as Yurian, Elen is a tomboy character who prefers fighting to hearts and flowers.

SARA CARSON
Even though Sara is Elen's sister, her character is the complete opposite. Shy and bashful she has a very strong character.

THOMAS BED
Is the leader and final member of the unofficial gang of Yurian, Elen, Sara and Thomas. His preferred weapon is a whip.

Tenchi So Zo (Creation of Heaven and Earth)

Enix ● 32 Mbit ● Autumn 1995

While Japanese gamers staunchly carry on waiting for the ever more delayed *Dragon Quest VI*, Enix quietly go about the task of trying to tie up the action RPG market.

Their next game, after the *Seventh Saga* sequel *Mystic Ark*, is another by long-time collaborators Quintet, whose *Actraiser*, *Soulblazer* and more recently *Illusion of Gaia* (now out here as *Illusion Of Time*) have been some of Enix's most popular titles. Tomoyshi Miyazaki, executive director of Quintet and Tenchi's designer, describes the game as a compilation of all Quintet's RPG works. It's true that, like *Gaia*, the game does seem more like a collection of small quests rather than the one, epic, coherent storyline of a SquareSoft game.

The graphics in Tenchi are also reminiscent of *Gaia*, albeit a little more complicated. Using the same overhead view common to most action RPGs, the hero Ark has to negotiate the same sort of traps and monsters that faced Will in *IOG* but some cut scenes do make use of Silicon Graphics technology, and the map screen uses a fractal system to magnify details and create a more realistic landscape.

Like the new Square games, Enix is making *Tenchi* slightly less linear by changing events depending on what action the player takes. This time, things can alter even if you kill a monster the wrong way. Life and death ties in closely with the general themes of the game: the two sides of the Earth and the meaning of creation. Certainly heavy concepts for a video game!

Enix seem to have an easier time of it when it comes to bringing their action RPGs to the West. Although a *Mystic Ark* translation seems to have been shelved for the time being, *Tenchi So Zo* should hopefully have a much easier time of it.

Tenchi faces the perils of the 5 Trials Towers.

Tenchi draws on *Illusion Of Gaia* and *Soulblazer* for its action.

Just where would adventurers be without a Mode 7 map to walk about on.

This guy's just asking for trouble, and Ark's just about to give him some.

THE CHARTS

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OFFICIAL GALLUP UK SUPER NINTENDO CHART

1	SUPER BOMBERMAN 2	Hudson Soft/Virgin	SP21 91%
2	SUPER INTERNATIONAL CRICKET	Nintendo	SP33 77%
3	MORTAL KOMBAT 2	Acclaim	SP24 90%
4	ANIMANIACS	Konami	SP26 28%
5	RISE OF THE ROBOTS	Acclaim/Mirage	SP29 33%
6	JUNGLE STRIKE	Electronic Arts	SP33 83%
7	STARWING	Nintendo	SP7 93%
8	INT. SUPERSTAR SOCCER	Konami	SP30 92%
9	DONKEY KONG COUNTRY	Nintendo	SP27 90%
10	SUPER STREET FIGHTER II	Capcom	SP23 96%

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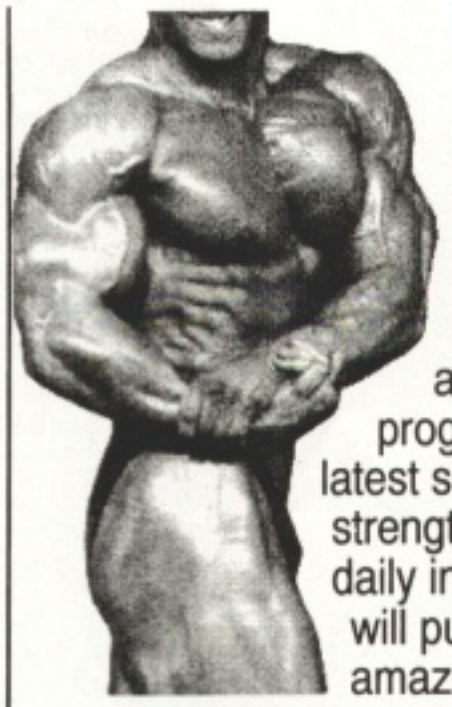

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MARIO'S WORLD

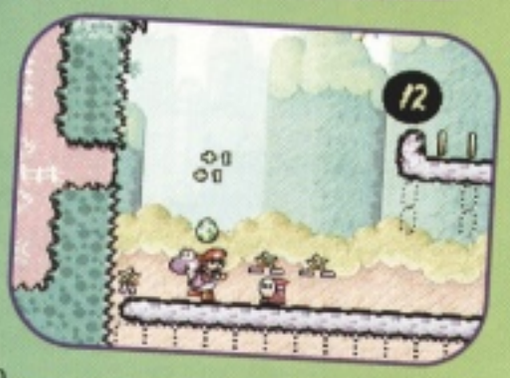
There are some things you should know about the place Nintendo in Japan actually call *'Yossy's Island'*. The question mark blocks from the original *Super Mario Bros.* have been thrown away and replaced with fluffy clouds with wings. They're usually placed out of reach and can be zapped with an egg or a spat nastie. They hold various items, depending on their mood, it seems, and sometimes work as triggers for staircases for some reason.

The question-mark clouds have wings. We know not why.

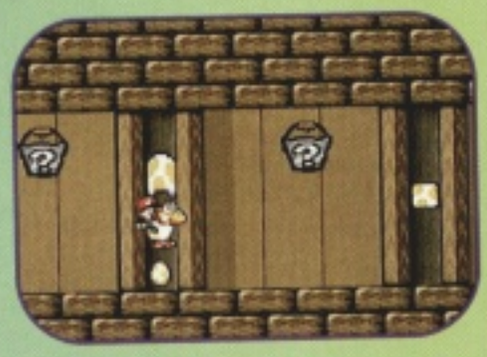
These are yellow, but the red variety are more important.

As well as being liberally dotted around the landscape, coins are dropped from question mark clouds and give extra points. Collecting all the red ones (many of which are hidden) goes partway to giving a perfect 100 score on the level. The other two collectables which go towards that elusive perfect – which, when achieved on all eight standard stages on each level, opens up the two bonus stages – are flowers and stars. The ultra-jolly flowers are reminiscent of the big coins from *SMW* in as much as there are five per level and they're often placed in annoyingly hard-to-reach places. If you collect all five you've got a much better chance of entering the bonus stage when you jump through the end-level hoop (see A JUICY BONUS box-out) The fire flower & stars are, we think, relatives of the fire flowers from *SMB*. When fed with a bad guy they give five stars in return. The stars' use is in upping the time in which to rescue Mario if he is separated from Yoshi. And the blocks? It couldn't be a Mario game with blocks in it, could it?

Smile, little flower, smile like a person who's just won the lottery who doesn't have many relatives.



Each little star adds one onto your Mario-collect time, hence the +1s.



Blocks now come in many different forms. These are particularly squishy.

YOSHI'S

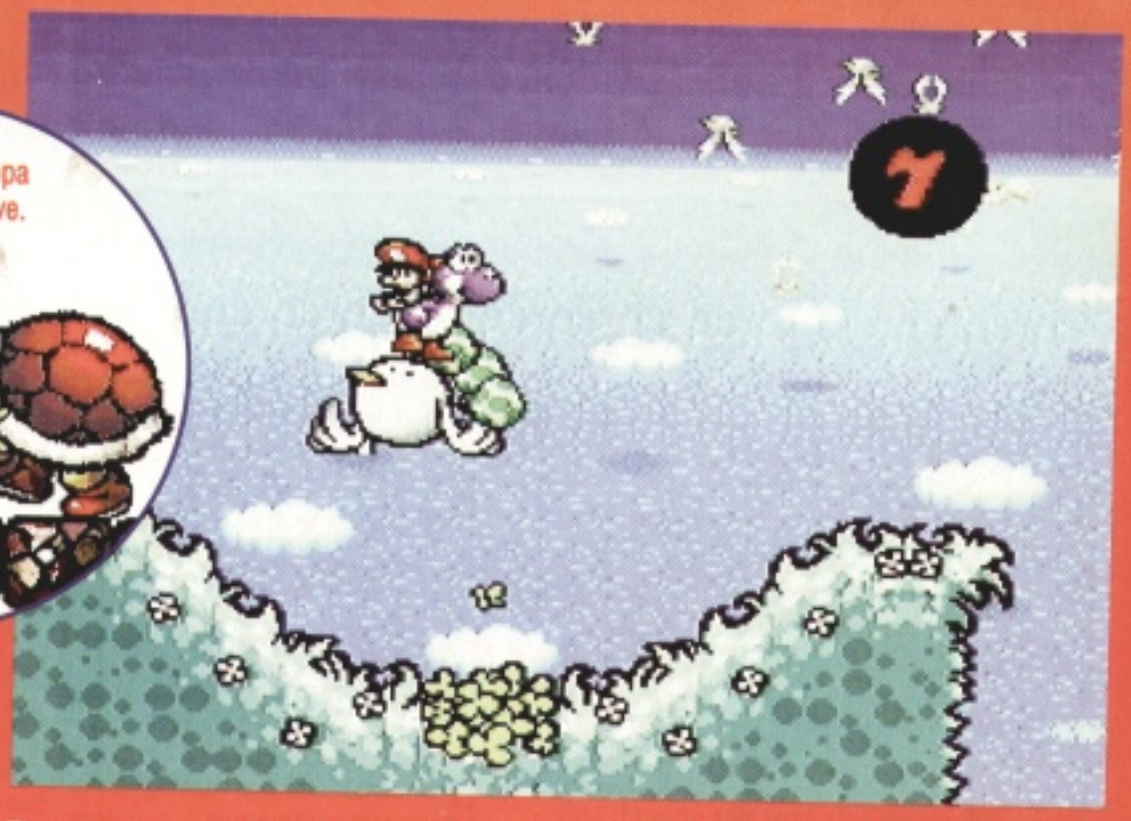
We've been patient. We've waited since November 21, 1990 for a sequel to *Super Mario World*. But has our stance been rewarded? Probably...

Japanese Release

Game: Yoshi's Island
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: In-house
Price: See importer
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit

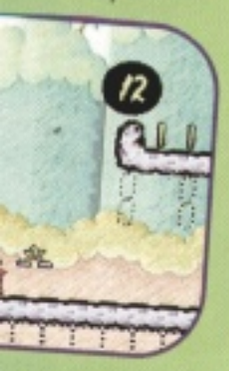
That there log is generated thanks to the Super FX2 chip assistance.

'Tis a giant Koopa Trooper, I believe.



There're plenty of humour in *Yoshi's Island*, as you'd expect from a Nintendo game. Late in the game you come across a level populated by birds. This particular variety has had one too many burgers, it seems, because it has a lot of trouble keeping its portly frame aloft.

D



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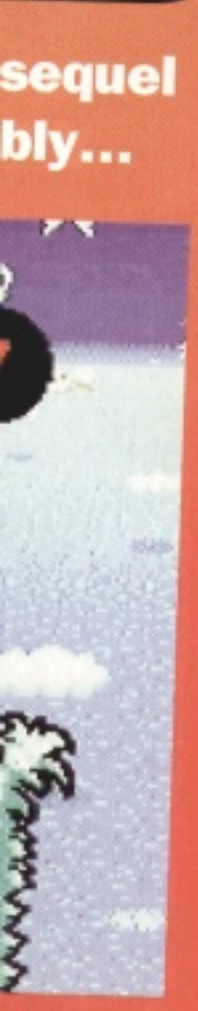


game. Late in
as had one
rame aloft.

Down the pipe, Mario, there you go.

Hit the bucket with an egg for lotsa bonuses.

It is a door. Where does it lead? A-ha.

Bow-Wow now scales in pseudo-Mode 7.

The 1-UP clouds, when licked, offer lives.

Do you recognise this nasty from *SMB2*? We did.

You know, I bet some platform games get really hacked off being called platform games because the term carries such an unwelcome stigma. *Yoshi's Island* certainly would be miffed, for to call it a platform game would be like saying Cindy Crawford's not unattractive.

It's difficult to know where to start with *Yosh*, because there's just *sooo* much in it. Let's do it on a point-by-point basis for the sake of convenience (and not, for example, that it's 11:34pm and, having spent much too long playing the game instead of writing the review, I've now little time to manage any other format, oh no):

▪ Control. This is the one single area where Nintendo just about always get it right – and it is, after all, the most important bit. Yoshi moves with the same cunningly imparted inertia as the original *Super Mario World*, leaving him always doing on-screen what you were telling him to do via the pad. Nope, no worries here, guv.

Behold the clouds of wonky-sighted-ness.

Yes, it's a Super FX2-generated polygon thing.

A-ha, those dastardly rotating platforms.

▪ Content. If you thought you'd seen all there was to see in a platformer – and by crikey I thought I had – then you'd better sweep those preconceptions under the rug and prepare for the most

LEVEL 1

SISLAND

BISH BASH YOSH

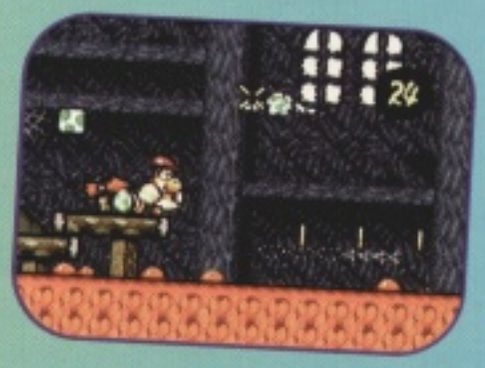
Yoshi's come a long way since his original appearance in *Super Mario World*. By continuing to hold down jump after launching from a platform, Yoshi will first dip and then climb to hover for a while, and this is essential in reaching certain sections of the game.

How does little Yosh do it? It's not as if he has proper wings or ought.

Another new ability is Yoshi's bottom bounce, achieved by jumping, then pressing down and jump simultaneously. This is used to take out destructible areas of scenery and, more commonly, to bash pegs into the ground to either gain passage, or to reveal a secret area elsewhere.

Would you like to be on the end of one of these? Not pleasant.

Target eggs can be collected either from egg plants (though not the sort you may be thinking), whose sole purpose is to repeatedly spew them forth into the playing area, or by eating a nasty and pressing down on the D-pad to fire it out of your rear end to the accompaniment of a painful-sounding popping noise. Held in a string behind Yoshi, eggs are launched with the 'A' button – pressing it brings up a cursor which moves back and forth from straight ahead through just over 90°, and another press lets it fly.



Targetting where you're luzzing an egg is a very important skill. Really.

Later in the game it's even possible to lick up a bad guy and have him pass through your body to assemble along with your eggs. These act like boomerangs when you fire them, swerving off in a homing arc and returning if their path isn't obscured by something else.

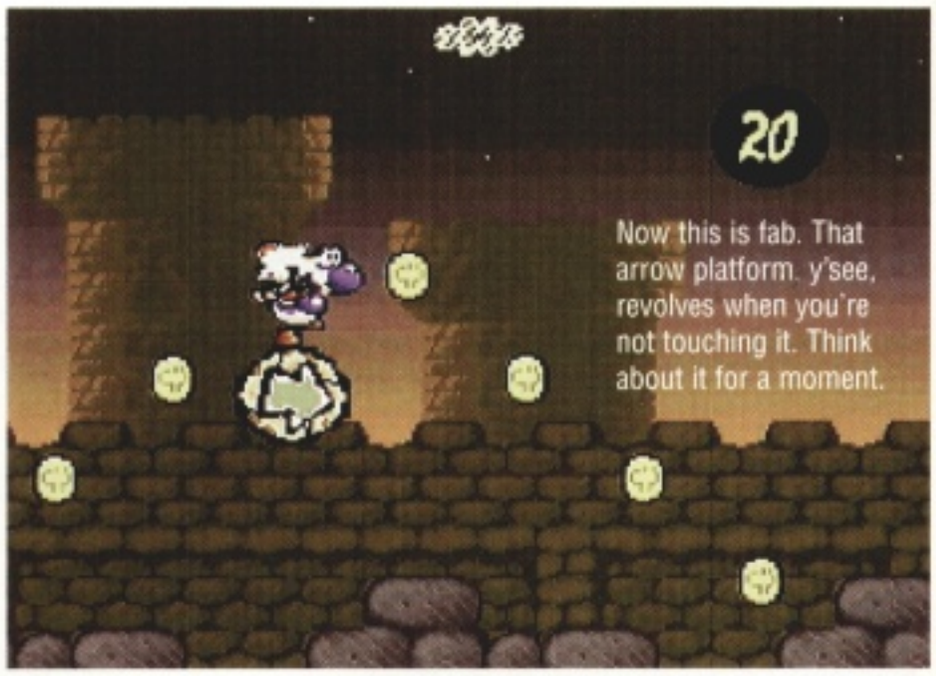
You can still swill nasties around your cheeks without swallowing them, of course, and spitting them about in classic Yoshi style is something you're forced to do to access certain parts of the game.

I do believe we've just gobbed out a baddy. And that's the truth.

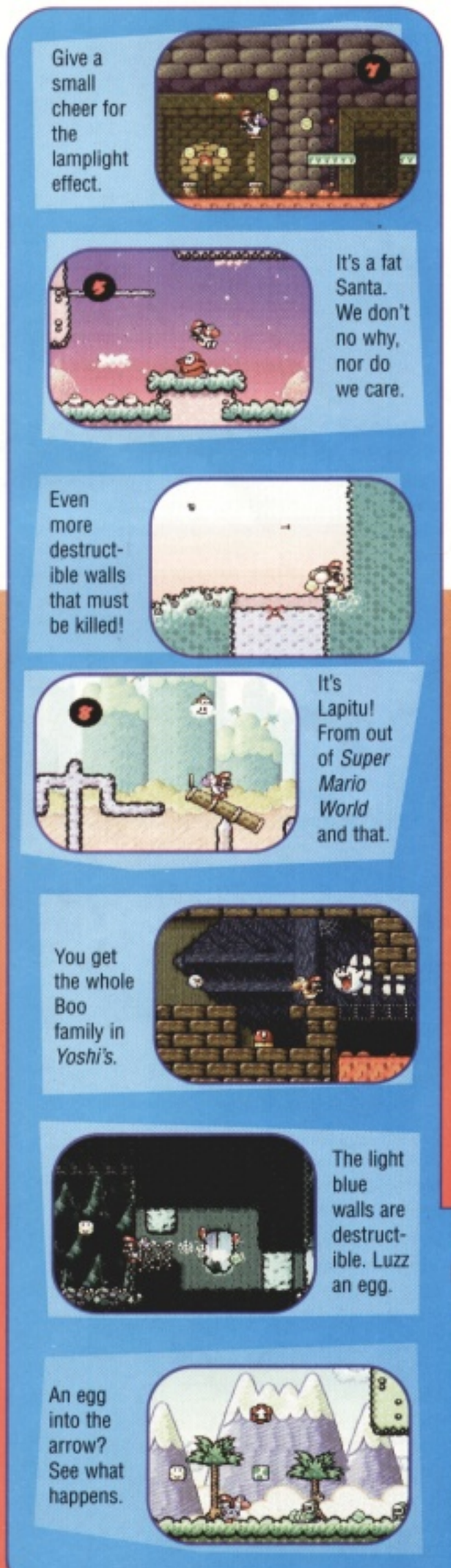
inventive game since, well, since the last Shigeru Miyamoto production.

Nothing is done by halves and just about every rule is broken. You never know what's just around each corner, but you know that it'll be something worth seeing. Just looking at the way in which the levels are put together you can see that there were no constraints – some levels consist of just one sub-level, others perhaps around eight or so, each interlinked with doors (both open and locked), pipes, passages and secret entrances. And these levels don't follow any common pattern in their layout, some being tall and thin, others traditionally *Mario World*-like and simple run-from-left-to-right affairs. This freeform, almost messy nature gives it a feeling of unpredictability – something you'd hardly expect from a platform game.

But, in an effort to make Yoshis do things you won't be expecting, Nintendo have also procured, with no pangs of guilt, I suspect, numerous touches from the bods over at Hudson Soft (whom, incidentally, I hold in the very highest regard: they might not always get the execution up to scratch, but their imagination is of scant equal). I don't want to spoil the game's surprises too much (heaven knows we've shown you more than enough already in the screen shots), but a couple of examples stand out. Upon meeting every boss character, the devious wizard geezer sails across the screen on his magic broomstick, casting a wave of transformative energy across the screen. Normally this would affect the boss itself (making it mutate into a pumped-up, more aggressive form, for example), but when you meet the froggy geezer it affects you, shrinking you down, and turning the tables somewhat. The frog promptly slicks you up with its lasso-like tongue, and you descend into its bowels to battle it out with its tonsils (naturally). It's pure *PC Kid*, of course, but because we've got a Super FX in the equation here, the frog's stomach walls flex and contract as you lob eggs up them to knock out a descending foe.



The nutty area 1-1 boss is very *PC Kid*, too, all dressed up in stripey loons that descend a little every time you bop him with an egg. Eventually, his trousers fallen, he glows red with the embarrassment of having his bits and pieces on show and deflates like a whoopee cushion, to fart off around the screen and disappear. On the whole, though – excepting the obvious limitations of it as a platform game – it's a


Give a small cheer for the lamplight effect.
It's a fat Santa. We don't no why, nor do we care.
Even more destruct-ible walls that must be killed!
It's Lapitu! From out of *Super Mario World* and that.
You get the whole Boo family in *Yoshi's*.
The light blue walls are destruct-ible. Luzz an egg.
An egg into the arrow? See what happens.

A BAD CASE OF DRAGON BREATH

Yoshi's Island is a verdant place, and many strange fruits flourish in its stages. The first of which isn't so odd, as it happens, being a common or garden melon. These can be harvested from the branches of trees, or – and this is infinitely more fun – stolen from the clutches of evil monkeys. Once stuffed into your fat face you can spit out the pips, knocking out not only baddies but also sections of destructible scenery.

You can freeze then shatter enemies if you collect the breath ice, erm, thing. A quick blast of icy breath is enough to put icicles on even the most thermal-underwear-equipped bad guy.

Conversely, the fiery option allows you to either fry living things or melt away sections of ice in the colder stages.

It's all happening – a bit of pippage spitting, a bit o' the old icy breath, and, finally, a little bit of plain old I-really-should've-skipped-the-curry.

LEVEL 2

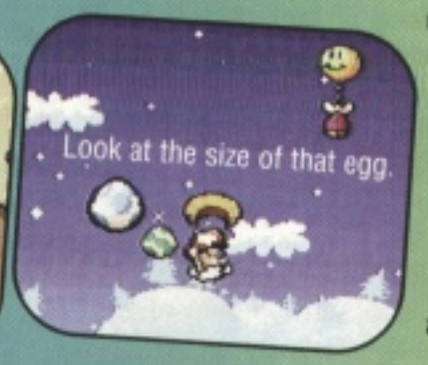
The counter in the top-right corner shows Mario-rescue time.

It is another door. Or is it the same door from a previous page? A-ha-hah-hah.

SUPER BABY MARIO!

Super Baby Mario & Super Baby Mario 2 Star icons, which in previous games would offer only invulnerability, now separate Mario and Yoshi, and endow the baby Italian with super powers. In this form he can run up walls (even to the point of hanging upside down) and won't suffer damage regardless of anything he hits. Also he's able to use a mini-cape thing which he holds above his head to glide through the air instead of falling like a stone.

Star icons are rare and only appear in places where Nintendo have designed set pieces in order to maximise their use – there is, for example, an enormous underground cavern quite early in the game whose walls can be run all the way around, collecting coins as you go.



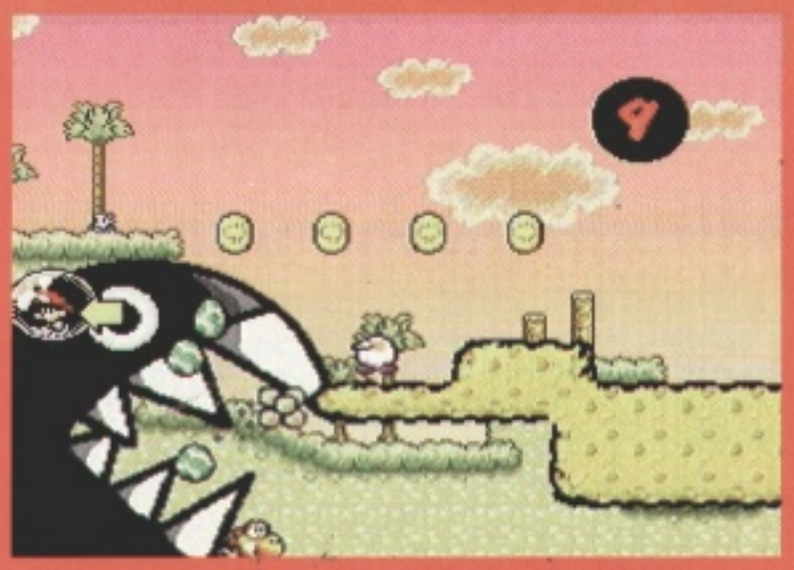
terrifically original game, with more smiles-per-minute on offer than I can remember from a game in a long while.

When playing through the early levels, and seeing all these splendiferous set pieces going off all around you, you get the nagging feeling that the game is giving up all its real surprises too early on. And to an extent this is true. An example again, if you'll forgive me. Climbing to a sky-dwelling section of platform you're faced with a child's toy-like inflatable pump arrangement attached to a big red balloon. Hopping onto it repeatedly pumps it up until it breaks free off the pump and floats off on a dead level course to the right, inviting you to hop aboard. You do, and it gradually begins to lose air, becoming smaller in size. Now, it's all very nice. But it didn't have to be a balloon. It could just as easily have been Just Another Type of Platform, and I can't help thinking the developers did it the way they did just for the sake of it; saying to each other, "Hey, isn't it about time we put in another flashy bit – er, how about..." So, while it's true to say that the game continues to surprise throughout its entirety, the later touches of spark are perhaps more forced than those which grace the earlier levels.

One of the really fab things about *Yoshi's* overall design is that it's hugely self-referential to its series. From very early in the game you'll come across bad guys lifted straight out of *Super Mario Bros. 2* (albeit in a slightly larger form and with a bit of a polish). And yer average, everyday Koopa Troopers are in there (looking even cuter than ever) plus there are pipe plants galore, now weighing in even nastier, looking like understudies from *The Little Shop Of Horrors*. It all conjures up a unique world of classic Mario flavouring, and, in playing it you realise Nintendo are the only videogames outfit with such a wide range of durable stars. *Shinobi* or *Bug* might be 'in' on the Saturn right now, or perhaps Law from *Tekken* on the PlayStation is currently seen as 'cool', but you get the impression Mario and chums will be gracing gaming screens next year and forever more, with those others long since forgotten.

Unfortunately, *Yoshi's* soundtrack never reaches the heights attained by its other great bits. A host of familiar *Mario World* effects have been brought over with very little change, and the tunes, while suitably jollified, lack the infuriatingly

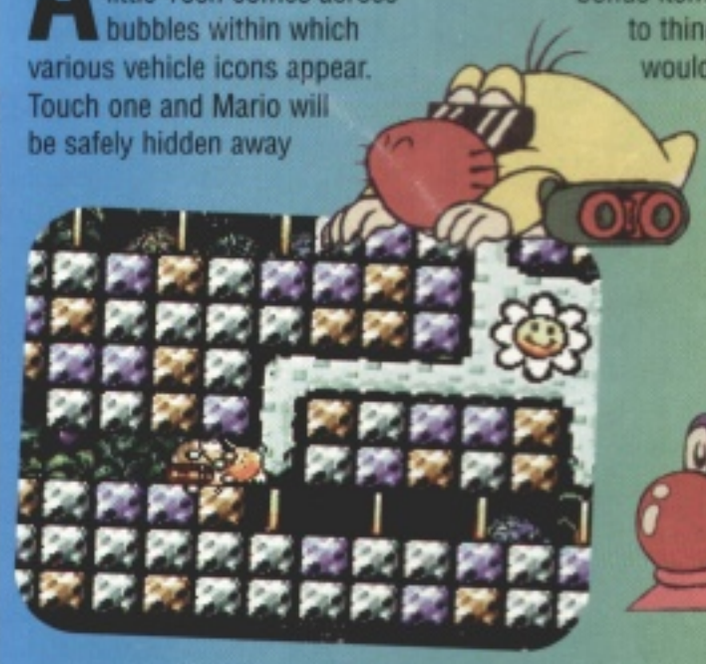
Guess how many times can you jump on this platform? Yeah, it's not tricky, really. It's another of the many bits which hark back to similar(ish) sections in the original *Super Mario World*.



Let's be honest, if your teeth were this big, would you be quite so keen as Bow Wow to get them out? It can't be sociable.

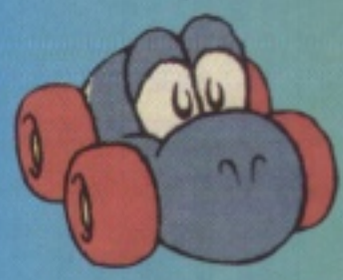
DRIVE, DIVE, CHUFF, FLY

At certain points in the game, little Yosh comes across bubbles within which various vehicle icons appear. Touch one and Mario will be safely hidden away for a while, leaving you to collect bonus items and generally get up to things that you normally wouldn't be able to manage.



He is a mole, and he lives not in a hole, but near various bonus items.

The train, says Wil, isn't a 'proper' vehicle. Hey, go ask him.



It's the sort of motah only seen on Playbus.

And who said the heli looks like Budgie? Who?

Not a yellow submarine, but a brown one.

You'd not be able to collect these coins had you not the advantage of being a helicopter.

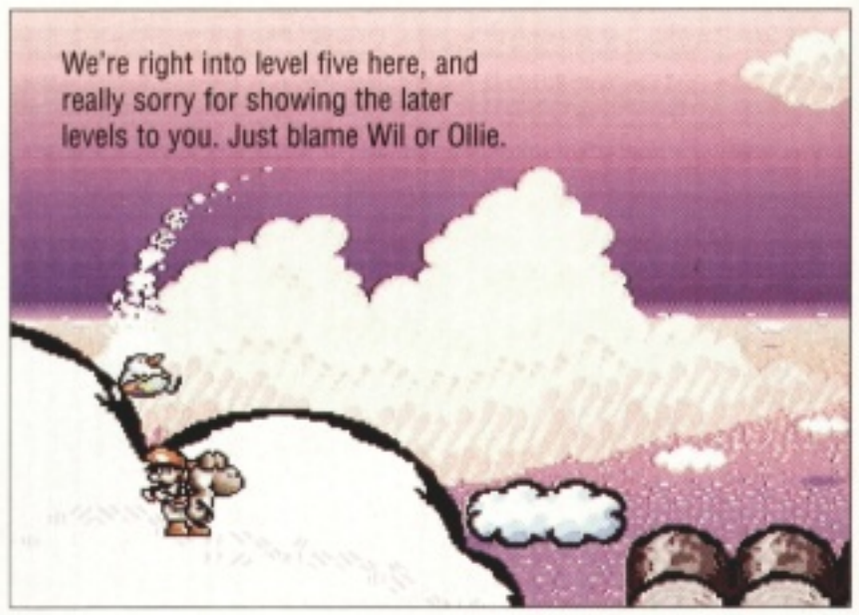
simple hookability of earlier *Mario* themes and have yet to get me humming along.

▪ Graphics. S'funny, there are still people who've seen this game and not been at all taken with the way it looks. "It's awfully scrappy," says one. "Hmm, I can't see what Nintendo were trying to do when they picked up on this style," opines another. I say rhubarb to them all. No one's ever done anything like it before, and it's a brave move that works a treat.

The styles of backdrop, like everything else in the game, refuse to fit into a rigid pattern, and one moment they'll be following the loose lines as immortalised on Wil's stonking cover illo on issue 34, the next being packed with much tighter detail.

What's most important, though, aren't the background styles at all – it's the way in which every single sprite in the game, right down to the most seemingly insignificant creature flitting insignificantly around in an insignificant place, is rendered with such breathtaking attention to detail. Heck, you'll have to see the little chaps who winch up balls on chains on one of the later levels to see what I mean – they don't just wind and wind like robots, you can see them straining their backs as they struggle to turn the wheel in its upward motion.

▪ Challenge. Now. This is the one and only point where I'm in two minds. My initial reaction was one of disappointment, because after around only a few hours of play I had progressed well into the second level of the six available. Now, however, I'm tackling the sixth world and things are getting tough in that classical Mazza World fashion. The game starts to really step up a few notches at around the halfway point – towards the end stages of the third level –



Yes, all will be revealed once we hit the cloud with an egg.

These rings act as restart points, as well as giving you five extra stars, should you need them. And you already knew that the studded door leads to this level's boss.

Bottom bounce on this stake to pass. Ah.
Why is everything so happy in *Yoshi's Island*, eh?
This yellowy stuff looks like cheese, I reckon.
Their eggs are in this foamy stuff says Wil.
Yup, it's the cover star of issue 34 of *Super Play*.
10
There's little to say about this fellow.
Yes, they really are tribal-type little geezers.
You'll have to squint to see these rotating platforms.

LEVEL 3

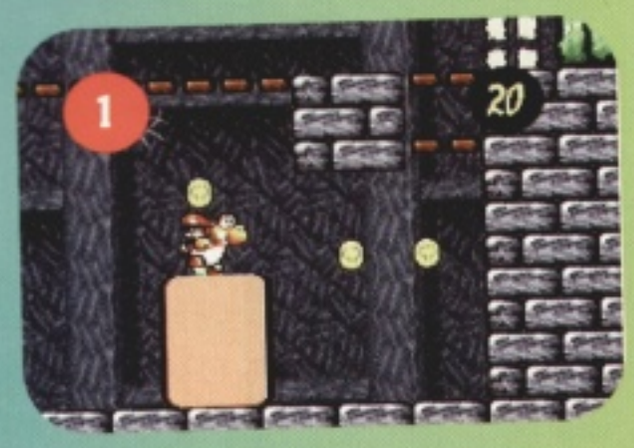
PLAY WITH MY DOUGH

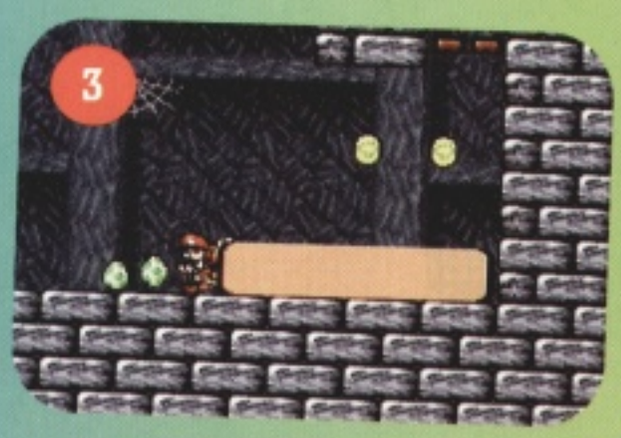
This is a silly box-out, and it's here just to show you a silly bit from the game.

1. Entering a new room, you wonder what the heck this block of pink stuff is.

2. You jump on it – first lightly, then harder. Blimey. It squashes just like Play-doh.

3. So you push it back into shape, use it to jump from to reach the exit platform, and leave. *Weird.*





with level layouts getting decidedly more complex, more locked doors and keys to find to get them open, and nasties placed with such dastardly precision to bring about your downfall that it's almost unthinkable.

The boss characters, of which there are two per level – one at the halfway point, and one at the end – are particularly easy to overcome. Each has the traditional weak spot in his armour, and as soon as you've sussed what it is – and how to get to it – actually hitting it is a relative cinch.

Mazza virgins will certainly find *Yoshi*'s a much bigger challenge than those who've played through the series. Despite its new gameplay twists and turns, *Yoshi*'s is clearly another branch of the *Mario* family tree – old hands will feel immediately at home and will therefore cruise where others stumble.

▪ That thar Super FX 2 chip. Yes, that slightly spiky with a flat underside wonder alone makes this a game like no other. Its power is most obviously used in generating gargantuan Mode 7-style boss characters and in dropping smooth-moving polygons directly over bitmap backdrops. But it also assists in rotating just about anything and everything it fancies, from the smallest nastie rolling down a hill to wobbling logs balanced precariously upon wooden stakes.

And that's about it, as individual points go. Rumour has it that *Donkey Kong Country 2: Diddy Kong's Quest* has been pushed back until next year, and after seeing *Yoshi* I can see why Rare would've felt their effort inadequate by comparison. Certainly, the original *Kong Country* game, even with its spangle-draped graphics, isn't fit to wipe *Yoshi*'s shoes.

The big question I've been trying to answer in my own mind is: is it better than *Super Mario World*, and I still can't decide. The explorative feel of the original SNES game certainly isn't in this pseudo sequel, and that's very much to its demerit. A large part of *SMW*'s appeal was generated by hunting out those secret exits to find your way to that new part of the game world map. It was possible to complete it by finishing only a handful of its levels, of course, but the satisfaction of conquering all 96 levels was unparalleled. There's certainly so much more to see in *Yoshi*'s, but, because you're always working from stage one through to eight you feel a bit led by the hand by comparison.

Perhaps the only real bad point to come out of *Yoshi's Island* is that it'll make you realise how much utter garbage you've been proferred since the last cart of its quality, and you'll start begrudging your local game-vendor that £60 he's asking for the latest insipid scrolling beat-'em-up even more.

But, in that context, its existence can only be welcomed, because every developer in the world will see it and play it, and hopefully have it shake them by the scruff of the neck and show them how good a 16-bit videogame can be, and how much it's true that they don't make enough of them like they used to.

Am I looking at the game in too much depth, with too much emphasis on what's it's doing and how slick it's doing it? Possibly. It's refreshing to do this, though, because no other videgaming format offers games of such quality, and the only format in the future that will will be a Nintendo product. It's a thought that makes me happy.

▪ **Tony Mott**

Cripes. We haven't seen such a lardy fellow since the fat sandwich man stopped coming round.

If you stay on this platform you will be (relatively) safe. If you fall off you will die. It's that simple.

A JUICY BONUS

If, at the end of a level, the roulette-like marker comes to rest on a flower, you'll be immediately transferred to a bonus game. And we're going to show them all to you, here:

From scratch card games to roulette, they're mostly here.

But this game (right), can only be accessed through a locked door.

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92%	84%	95%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
89%		94%

VERDICT: As the best game since *Super Metroid*, *Yoshi's Island* is a testament to Nintendo's untouchable design skills. It won't last as long as is the ideal, but that's because you'll be so addicted scrabbling through the thing. How it's going to be topped I really don't know, but I'm looking forward to seeing it happen.

And he's climbing a stairway to a spangly round ring thingymajig.

Sorry, I'm all captioned out. You'll have to gain pleasure from this without my subtle accompaniment.

It'f fo nailf you'll fwear Fabrewulf juft fmafhed your fafe in.

KILLER INSTINCT

What the hell are you doing? Where have you been? Call yourself a Nintendo fan?

I mean, forgive me if I'm wrong, but you've turned to a review of *Killer Instinct*. Haven't you played it yet? This is surely the game that needs no explanation. If you're the slightest bit interested in one-on-one fighting games and you own a SNES then you've probably made up your mind already, one way or the other.

The one thing we can learn from the unresolved *Streetfighter* vs *Mortal Kombat* debate is that one man's meat is another

"You handle your sword well, sir, for a dead bloke."

Jago's tiger temple: a shrine of peace, meditation, and – oh.

We don't know how they achieve this superb lighting effect, but we hold it in primitively superstitious awe.

UK Release

Game: Killer Instinct
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Rare
Price: £59.99
Release: September 22nd
Players: 1 or 2
Cart ROM: 32 Mbit

JAGO

Played Ryu or Ken? Then start here. Amazingly, the meditative warrior monk's stage still contains that luscious golden tiger head (albeit from a different perspective).

FULGORE

The Predator: charges like a rhino, leaps like a panther, lands like a dustbin. As the UK Wired magazine noted recently, if Fulgore can unfold a machine gun from his head, why doesn't he use it earlier?

ORCHID

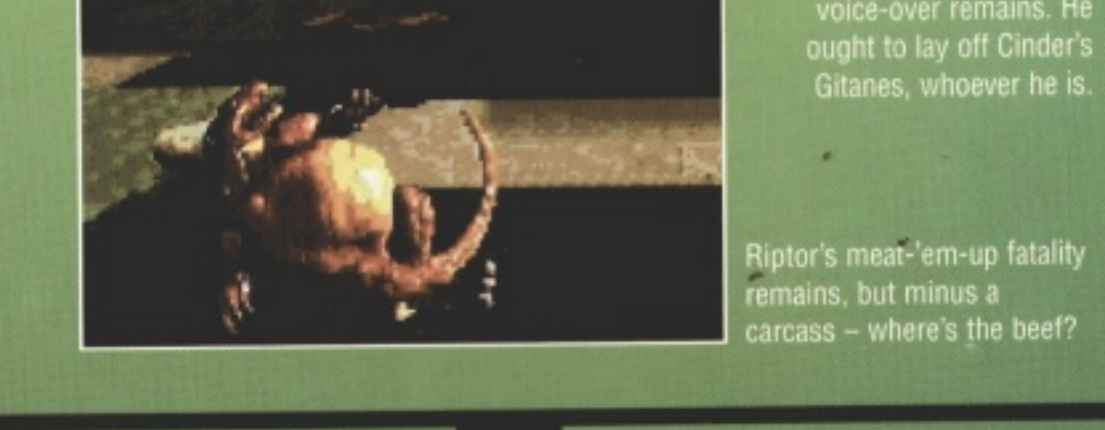
I know a gentleman shouldn't pass comment, but Orchid is even less anatomically plausible than ever. Her character designer must have really resented being bottle-fed.

man's McDonalds. Some players love to practice cross-up/dragons, whilst others prefer dragon morphing on their sorry friends. *Killer Instinct* draws on both games but doesn't quite manage to surpass either of them at what they do best, so it's just as likely to divide players into two camps. In my own opinion it's still a solidly entertaining example of fantasy fighting, and whatever it might lack in terms of game depth it makes up for with action and adrenalin.

So here's the deal. If you really haven't seen *Killer Instinct* before then pop down the local arcade and invest in a couple of credits. Rather than high-handedly tell you whether you should like it or not, I'll use the rest of this precious space to judge the success of Rare's home conversion – which is all many of you want to know.

Some understandable compromises have been made in cutting *Killer Instinct* down from a 32-bit coin-op to a 16-bit console game. Fewer frames of animation, less speed (even running at 60Hz), some occasionally messy graphics, no scaling

Wulf saunters past, clawing Jago. So saunter claws does *[No – Ed]*.



These rendered images may be static, but the gravelly voice-over remains. He ought to lay off Cinder's Gitanes, whoever he is.

Riptor's meat-'em-up fatality remains, but minus a carcass – where's the beef?

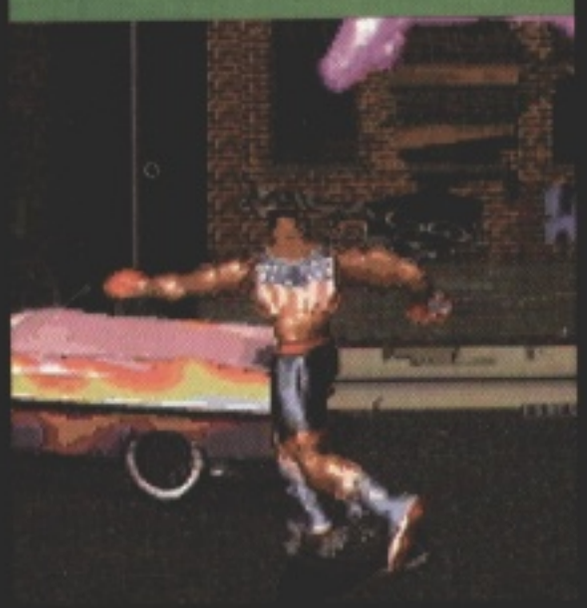
IT HERTZ, AND HERTZ BAD

Unfortunately, the excellence of this conversion depends very much on the machine on which it's running. We were decidedly unimpressed when we first plugged it into a 50Hz PAL Super Nintendo, but on a US 60Hz NTSC machine it was like playing a different game: so much so that we had to mention it here. We hope and trust that *Killer Instinct* will be better optimised for the British SNES before its release.

Nintendo's new security measures prevented the game running through most of our adaptors, including the AR3 – it would only work on an original Action Replay, curiously enough – so we strongly advise you to buy the cartridge appropriate to your SNES.

COMBO

TJ's charged moves seem easier on a joypad. Once voted the character most likely to carry off a humiliation dance without losing his cool.



RIPTOR

A bit slow at times – probably comes from having his brain in his rear end – but his multi-hit bicycle claw is a sight to behold. Yesterday he ate the entire cast of *Primal Rage*. And he wasn't even hungry.

SABREWULF

The candle-lit study of his castle is a favourite stage setting of ours. Would you look at the quality of that portrait hanging on the wall behind?

out to landscape views and (obviously) no cinemas. In many ways, this pruning has shown up the limitations of the game: strip it of some of its arcade gloss and it's clearly not up there with Capcom's finest. The so-called 'combos' are really elaborate multi-strike special moves, and there's more to tagging six hits in *SFII* than ten hits in *KI*.

The special move recognition was always a stickler for perfection, and with the animations running slightly slower it's more perceptible. But Rare has added a welcome option to make the combo breakers easier, and the game seems far more playable for it. I'd have preferred a few more options for a home version, and those included (such as the mid-game pause) exude the disturbing whiff of afterthought.

But now I feel like a heel for picking on such tiny faults, because what they've achieved is simply remarkable.

Unlike less hygienic videogame stars, beat-'em-up characters always sport a change of clothing.

If only life had a character select screen, eh? How many of us would stick with our default option?

Projectiles still cause reflective glare, the perfect character shadows have been retained and they've used colours that the machine simply doesn't have. Play on a big TV with stereo speakers and you can relive the arcade experience: relish the elaborate next-gen backgrounds, breathe in that sample-packed soundtrack, revel in the glorious can't-do-that-on-a-SNES experience.

Remember when beat-'em-ups were fun? *Killer Instinct* does. You will too when you knock your hapless opponent off the top of the screen and fry them on their descent with a well-timed fireball. I just hope you've made plenty of money this summer because, what with *Doom*, *Yoshi's Island* and now *Killer Instinct* being released, it would be a tragedy to have to choose just one of them.

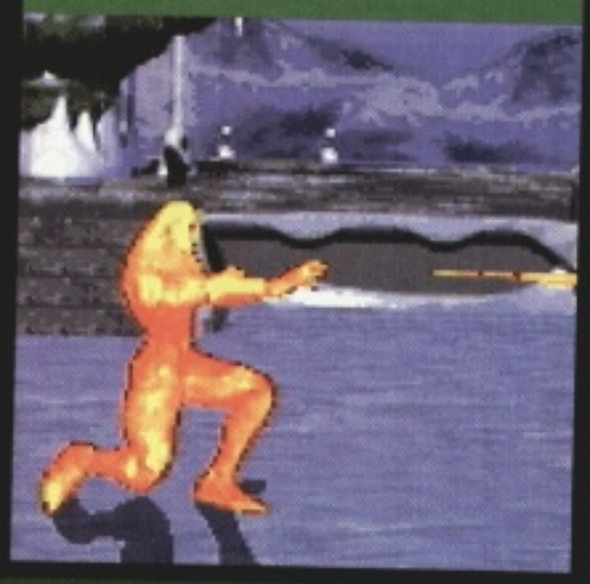
● **Zy Nicholson**

CLOSER TO THE EDGE

Back in *SP30* we revealed one of the 'Wile E Coyote' finishing moves on the arcade machine. To demonstrate how *KI* has been implemented with 16-bit technology, here's a similar plummeting scene taken from the SNES version. Mode 7 scaling substitutes for some of the original animation.

CINDER

A "wimp", eh, Lobb? Not something I'd go around saying about a guy who can light Gitanes on his nipples. In this SNES version, try changing his sprite colour with the joypad – he's a dead ringer for the Silver Surfer.



THUNDER

The Chief is one character where you figure a joystick might be more suited to the rapid execution of his mid-air moves. Alas, two players can no longer indulge in the custom of standing miles apart on each side of his bridge and charging each other.

GLACIUS

The icy one's morphing uppercut was a superb move for cutting long distances short in panned out views, with the drawback that you could easily see it coming. Now he's claustrophobia-inducingly dangerous on the SNES.

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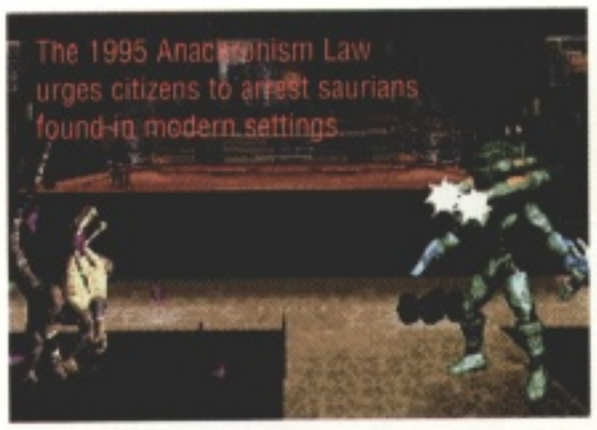
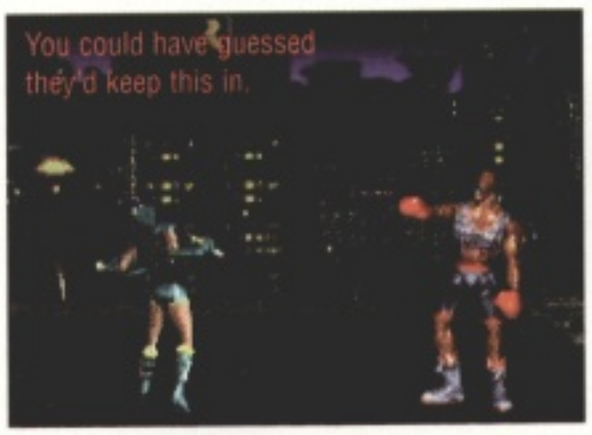
Nicholson





TONY'S COMBO BREAKING OPINION

There's no denying it: Rare are among the best developers working on the SNES right now, and I'm sure no other outfit could've produced a conversion as close as this.

But being an accurate conversion just isn't enough if the original was nothing more than a heavily spruced up clone of successful games that'd gone before, which is exactly what *Killer Instinct* is – and I know how many of you agree with me because I read the stacks of letters we receive on the topic every month.

It's impossible to underestimate how much a new style of graphics can affect your potential paying audience, and it was in exploiting this to the max that Rare and Nintendo were able to enjoy such terrific coin-op turnover with *KI* and world-beating sales in the home with *Donkey Kong Country*.

It's seems obvious that Rare sat down with their graphics techniques and said, "Right, what's popular? The beat-'em-up. And the most popular examples? *SFII* and *MKII*. Now, why don't we simply put the two together, along our super-spesh visuals, to make a new hit?" And they did.

Which is why *KI*, in coin-op form and on the SNES, seems too *manufactured*. Give me a Capcom beat-'em-up any day.

32 INTO 16 GOES...?

It would be naïve to expect a perfect replica, and changes were essential. Some of the fatalities seem a bit lame when you've played the original, and aficionados will spot several shortcuts taken in the graphics department. We couldn't get the arcade cheats to work either but that may just have been our preview version (after all, NoA's press shots showed the cloister-arched subterranean background that only a level cheat can access).

But wherever cuts were unavoidable, Rare's coders have made the effort to replace or improve. For instance, Spinal's accumulated skull projectiles no longer circle his body but a skull bar at the top of the screen shows those in his possession. The swinging lamps in Fulgore's stage, with their lighting effect so reminiscent of Donkey Kong and his Country ways, are a worthy addition. Re-accommodating Cinder into the bargain doesn't seem to have troubled them unduly.

Let this arcade shot remind you of what they had to convert.

Glacius launches Orchid from her rooftop stage, sending her spiralling into a rather sparse vertical camera shot before she hits a tiny cadillac. Not quite the hot wheels of the picture above, eh?

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SPINAL

I've never quite got the hang of Spinal, thanks to all those MK-style tappety-tap-tap-in-one-direction moves. But his sword still makes an almighty kerchang!, and that's a plus in my book.

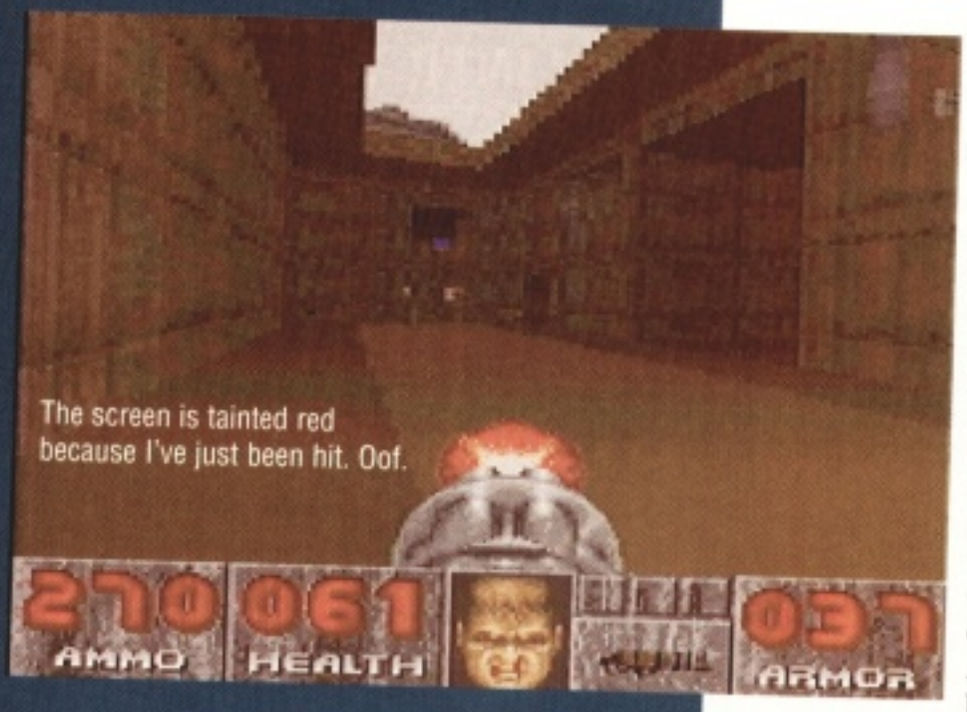
EYEDOL

He might look like a troglodyte from a Ray Harryhausen movie, but that's all part of the trashy appeal. Shame about his Vs screen rendering, though.

KILLER INSTINCT
Nintendo

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91%	87%	85%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
74%		85%

VERDICT: Not arcade perfect, of course not, but a conversion that totally captures the essence of the original. *Killer Instinct* is surely the last word in side-on beat-'em-ups.



UK Release

Game: Doom
Publisher: Ocean
Developer: Sculptured Software
Price: £64.99
Release: End of September
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit

**Spilled blood.
Mangled flesh.
Screams of death.
It can only be...**

DOOM

It's the game they said could never be done. It's a 3D blastfest on a Schwarzeneggerian scale. It is, as our admittedly unhinged colleagues over on *Amiga Power* would say, *Doom*, but on the SNES. And it's really rather excellent.

When it appeared on the PC, *Doom* changed the face of gaming forever. Like *Super Mario Bros.*, which altered perceptions of how platform games could work, and *Virtua Fighter*, which reinvented beat-'em-ups in an instant, it ushered in a new wave of software. It was a pivotal game.

And it's not very difficult to see why it caused such a stir. Unlike the *Mortal Kombat* series, it wasn't just a question of throwing in a Tarantino's-worth of O positive and unwilling organ donation to grab headlines (although it does in fact have more visceral content than any other game) – *Doom* was a success because it cast the player into a semi-believable world of unremitting action. You could be running up a flight of stairs in the hunt for target living tissue, and be running down another a moment later in retreat. It was a world packed with corridors and antechambers and vast open-air combat zones. And it had a real feel: you could look out of windows onto courtyards below, and see beyond them more windows, beyond which living enemies visibly lay. And there were secret rooms, traps and passageways enough to keep even the most experimental explorer on the hunt for

Does this symbol make any of you want to play death metal records backwards? Does it?

Most of original PC developer id's slightly dodgy themes have made it across to the SNES. Hmm.

RUN THAT BY ME AGAIN

To give you a more inciteful view of what a typical level of *Doom* is about – and let's face it, you can only glean so much of its true nature by looking at individual shots of sections of the game – we decided to run a step-by-step play-through of level one.

Now, you could cut out each of these screenshots and paste them onto thin pieces of card in order to fashion some form of flip-book thing, but that wouldn't really work, so please don't do it. Just follow from left to right.

Right. I'm off. Now, what's that thing on the floor over there? Let's trundle over and have a wee gander.

A-ha. It's a dead, well, thing. A dead red thing, in fact. Good, saves me some work. Now, what else do we have...

I see. Some form of courtyard lies beyond the building within which I stand. May pop down there later.

A very fine window frame over to the right. Being the curious sort, I'll have to check it out.

Spinning back round, I see that there appears to be two ways of exiting this room. I'll try left.

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the SNES. Hmm.

Handy, if concise, messages frequently pop up at the top of the playing window. See? I need a key.

weeks. And it's all in this version too – well, 22 of the original's 27 levels, at least – albeit with flat-coloured floors and ceilings (which really doesn't make too much difference anyway, as it happens).

Doom, but on the SNES, is one of the best reasons to own the machine. Sculptured have brought over the experience of exploration and exaltation admirably. The joypad controls are fine, with perhaps a touch of treacley responsiveness during only the most action-heavy moments.

It's fast too, even on our little-used UK machine. Sculptured have claimed a 10-15 frames per second update, but that's relative to a 60Hz display. We're obviously talking more 8-12 on a good ol' English model, but that is also to say it moves along at a perfectly serviceable rate of knots. Of course, slowdown is, er, slower downer, but that's the price you pay for not having the inclination. One last note on this topic: on a 20" screen a US machine manages a window ('cos every Super FX game has a window within the screen and not just borders, right?) approximately 9" x 14", while a European model manages 7.5" x 14". Just thought you might like to know.

· There are, as was to be expected, a number of discrepancies in *Doom* when examined as a conversion from the PC. First and most frequently galling is sticky wall syndrome, which affects certain sections of the game. Edging along some vertical surfaces, it's possible to become somehow locked with shoulder and wall connected. Believe me, it's not what you want to happen when wading purposefully into a room full of Demons, weapons aflame. (I mean, you can almost see them surpressing little grins as you get tangled up like some kind of Mr Bean with big guns.) There's no immediately apparent reason for it happening in some places rather than others, but I'm led to believe by one of my more technically aware (and infinitely more boring down the pub)

This is the most common form of switch, and its uses vary considerably. This one opens a door somewhere.

Can you make out the nastie? My gun can.

I MAY CLOSE EARLY TODAY...

Weapons – them's the ones, as sometime West Country warblers The Wurzels might say. They are the most important part of the *Doom* experience. More specifically, unleashing their pure, uncompromising pain-inducing might upon the bad guys you run into on every corner is the most important part; putting the blighters to work.

We covered *Doom*'s armoury briefly in our extensive preview of the game back in issue 34, and now it's time to see a few of the fellers in action, heh heh.

It is the chaingun. Not bad.

The shotgun is fine too.

But this? S'roobish, pal.

There's no way to get the chainsaw here without finding a switch. Patience...

Ooh, a small staircase, flanked by two suspiciously *Blakes 7*-like machine things. Going up...

No, it's a special green t-shirt, which awards the wearer armour points. My size, is it? I'll take it, then.

Through it now, and – I say – a spot of action. Let's wipe this fellow's eyebrows off with a bullet or two.

Moving around to the right-hand side of the room, I find a passageway guarded by a geezer.

Just as I suspected, Watson. A selection of Good Things ripe for my plunder. But is that a t-shirt I spy?

I've had a quick, er, crevice search now, and collected various extra points. The right exit reveals a door.

Let's pop over to see where these guys came from. Ah, more armour bonuses. I'll sweep 'em up and leave.

Now, this is plainly not nice. A room with a green acid floor and a nastie firing from a distant alcove.

associates that it's down to Sculptured having to 'cheat the wall detection a little to fit it in,' and it being 'a symptom of that', though I suspect that clarifies it to you as much as it did me – i.e. very little.

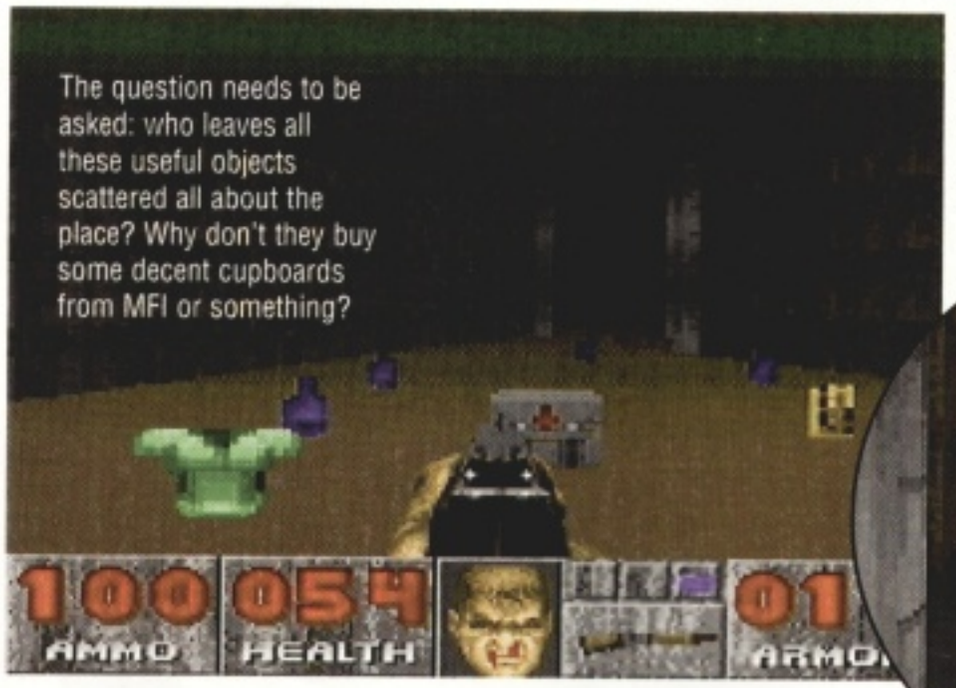
Another slightly annoying factor that's slipped into the SNES version – or rather it's something that the PC original did have that had to be dropped during the journey over – is that the bad guys have no true line of sight. On the PC, when a nastie couldn't see you, he wasn't interested in coming over and ripping out your kidneys and having them in a big pie for tea. On the SNES, however, every last Jack of them seems to know where you are. Not a problem, you say, more challenge, you conclude, and you're absolutely right. But there were times when, low on energy, I could have done without taking a lift up to a higher level only to be greeted by a wonderful view of the nasal interior of something I'd rather be hiding from. We must put this, too, down to the technical limitations of the SNES according to my relevantly minded friend. "The line of sight was probably left out because it would be slow to calculate,' says he, with only a hint of a though-I'm-not-actually-100%-sure squint on his face.

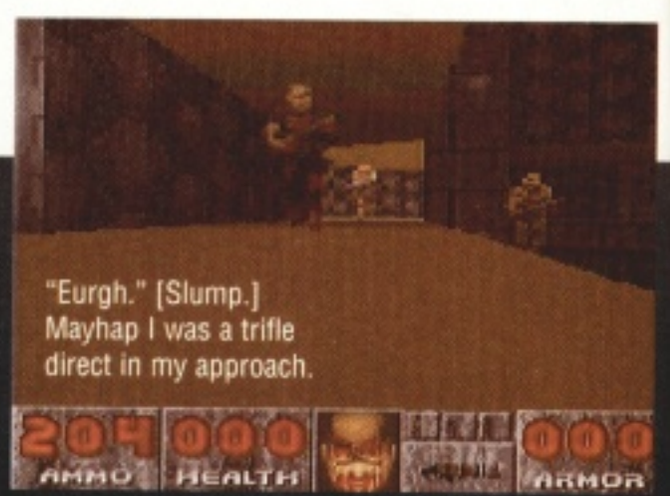
The third and final little point concerns opening doors. Secret doors, that is, which are usually discovered by approaching a suspect surface and examining it by pressing 'A' on the pad. If there's one there, hurrah, it will make itself known, if not, well, bugger all happens, obviously. The thing is, every time you press 'A', you let out a brief, humorously Johnny Holmes-style grunt. So you can't tell whether it's an unopenable section of wall, or whether you're just too far away, because you make the same sound even when 'pushing' against thin air. It shouldn't prove a problem in the long term, though. (In fact, I'm being a bit picky, and it's probably best that we move on.)

Despite any differences evident in this conversion, Sculptured Software have produced arguably the most technically accomplished SNES title yet seen. It's ironic that games such as this – made possible only with a fine technical mastery of the system – should appear at a time when many are dismissing the machine and turning their thoughts to pretend next generation machines. (A certain black box on its way from Kyoto accounts for my usage of the word 'pretend', as if you didn't know.)

Playing this and *Yoshi's Island* seems to have taken up most of my time this month *(We know – Ed)*, and it's all down to Super FX2 technology. It's taken time for developers to maximise the potential of Argonaut's wunderchip, and I hope this marks its resurrection, with more NCL-produced efforts using its power appearing in the next six months.

And to Sculptured Software I say: please put license fodder such as *Mortal Kombat 3* to one side, and use the experience gained in producing *Doom* to create an entirely new, independent game, with new themes, levels and even better gameplay – a SNES *Doom*-beater, if you like. The amount of *Doom* clones on the PC seems to the increase by the day and the market for such games is still on


The question needs to be asked: who leaves all these useful objects scattered all about the place? Why don't they buy some decent cupboards from MFI or something?
100 AMMO
054 HEALTH
01 ARMO



Having negotiated the patently daftly designed walkway, I spin back to take out that git.

O-ho, more dodgy *Blakes 7* accessories. No matter, I shall focus upon that suspicious form lurking in the shadows...

I'd better collect these little bits and pieces before pressing on to the far door visible in the last frame.

Exiting in itself is achieved via pressing this here red knob/switch thing. Now it's on to the juicier stuff.

He's no longer of this earth, and now I'm off down a corridor which threatens to kill me by being dull.

...and, in the flickering light, examine its remains after I've dealt it some deathage.

And it turns out to be the exit, or rather it leads to the exit room. A hearty hurrah for me.

Exiting in itself is achieved via pressing this here red knob/switch thing. Now it's on to juicier stuff.

the rise, in fact probably even more so on the SNES.

Until my little dream comes true, this'll certainly keep me warm inside over the coming months. Because, despite the quality of *Yoshi's Island*, after an hour or two watching Yoshi's beaming face bouncing around the screen, there's really nothing to compare to switching over to this, slinging a chuff-off chainsaw over your shoulder and striding out to stream it gracefully into the inviting shoulder of a Colonial Marine, who can but miserably submit to your foul intentions. Don't call me disturbed – I merely enjoy a rocking good videogame, and *Doom* qualifies as such with blood-flecked honours.

● **Tony Mott**

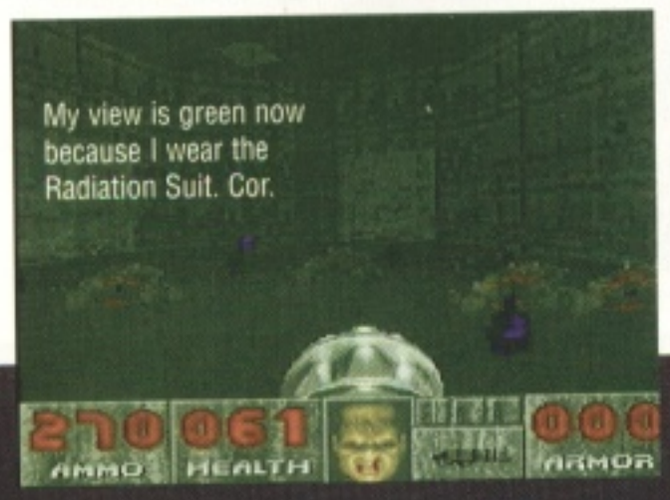
THE MAP OF DOOM

There's a really clever map in *Doom*, but it's not like the one you'll find on the PC – it is, in fact, a hugely improved version. It pops up with a quick stab of 'select', and rotates and moves in real time. You can even zoom it out and twist it around should the desire grab you. And the great thing is, it's in using the map that you get to uncover Nintendo's secret plot to pretend WWII never happened. Look...

This was actually in the exact shape of a Nazi swastika on the PC. True.

Find this little gem and you'll get the whole map opened up to you without having to explore it yourself. Handy stuff.

Peek-a-boo, motherhuggers!



My view is green now because I wear the Radiation Suit. Cor.

Behold, 'tis a teleportation device.

The best thing about *Doom*: dead bodies stay put. Hurrah.

These undulating floor tiles are surely the work of the devil himself.

eved via knob/switch he juicier stuff.

eved via knob/switch icier stuff.

"Open wide, buddy."

DOOM

Ocean

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
94%	81%	92%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	92%
89%		

VERDICT: Making *Wolfenstein* look like an afternoon tea appointment with an elderly relative, *Doom* is a heart-attack-packed bundle of rapid shoot-'em-up ruthlessness, realised in a style that'll change the way you look at games. And it's on the SNES. And everything.

BATMAN

What? Not you as well. Listen – Batman Forever is, in fact, a terrible film. T-e-r-r-i-b-l-e. Got it?

UK Release

Game: Batman Forever
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Probe
Price: TBA
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 24 Mbit

Robin introduces himself, while Batman hangs below.

So, *Batman Forever*, then, eh? And now, with striking boldness, Acclaim have turned it into... a scrolling beat-'em-up.

And, phew, what a scrolling beat-'em-up it is. It's been put together by Probe, the people who brought us the SNES versions of the *Mortal Kombat* games, and it shows. Just like in *Mortal Kombat*, they've videotaped real actors and transferred the images directly into the game, making for ultra-smooth animation. And the characters are just as versatile as the ones in *Mortal Kombat*, too, with a whole range of moves and special weapons which you activate by pressing Down, Towards, A, and so on.

Except, of course, that it scrolls. As you uppercut and roundhouse your way through the baddies, you also progress through Arkham Asylum, the circus, the subway, Wayne Manor, the Batcave and, eventually, the Riddler's hideout.

And you can not only 'be' Batman, but Robin too. Or both if you haul in a pal. So it's... No. Aaarghh.

('Reviewer' takes several punches to the head and body and collapses to the ground. His face, which turns out to be a clever latex mask, is peeled off to reveal a man with slicked back hair, an expensive suit and a portable phone.)

(Reader's voice: *Gasp. It's that evil super-criminal, the Marketer™.*)

And I'd have got away with it too, etc

Phew. It's a good job I arrived when I did, readers. For hidden beneath *Batman Forever*'s admittedly slick graphics is a desperately poor game which you should refrain from buying.

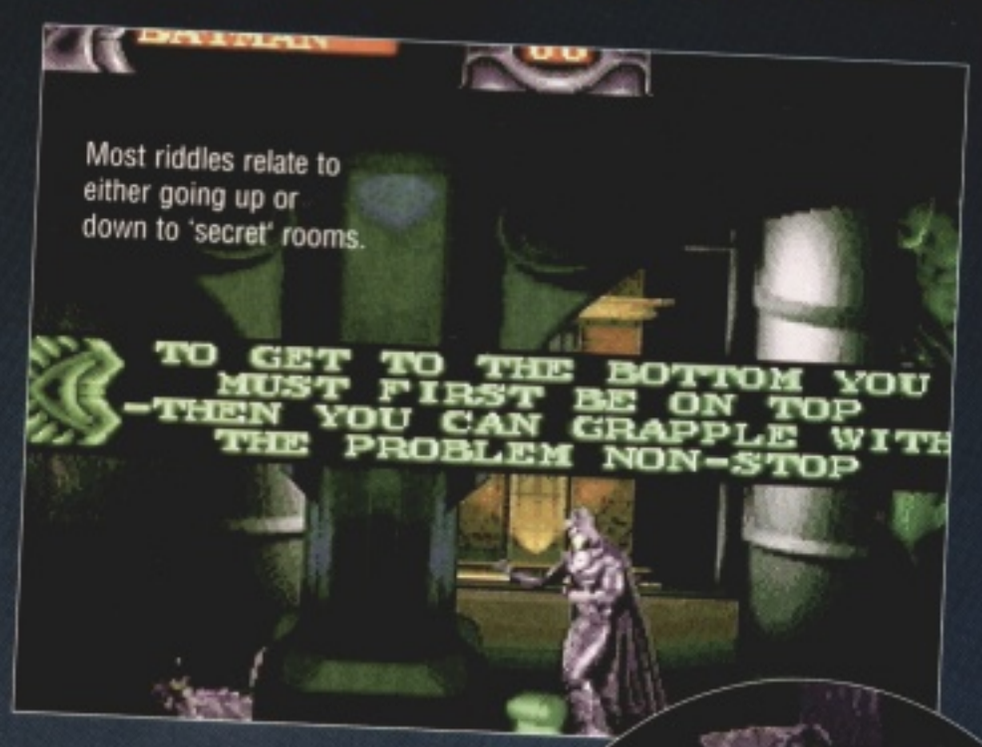
The dark, moody graphics? The backdrops are great when viewed in isolation, with lots of detail and parallax scrolling. Join them altogether, however, and the result is screen after screen of relentless murk. Batman's meant to be dark, certainly, but not all the way through. Any desire to keep playing to see what comes next swiftly evaporates.

The Motion-o-captured baddies, or whatever they're called? Again, in isolation they each look great – solid and smoothly animated, like the characters in *Mortal Kombat*. But they're only a couple of inches high, making them no fun to beat up. There are never more than a couple on the screen at once. Being based on real people, they all look much the same, with no variation in shape or size, and only their clothes to distinguish them. And there are only a handful of different ones, so you find yourself killing the same people over and over again. There aren't even any

If I jump on your fingers like this...

'Hmm. I'm sure it said to do it like this. Let's have another look at the picture.'

In the circus, a time bomb counts down excitingly.



Most riddles relate to either going up or down to 'secret' rooms.

'Aaah-tchoo.'

impressive bosses or anything – when you meet Two-Face and the Riddler, they're just a couple more titchy sprites who happen to take more hits to kill than the others.

The (supposed) tension and drama of the film? Each level is broken up into lots of short stages. As you pass from one to the next, the pompous music fades out, the screen goes black and you're asked, slightly desperately, to 'Hold on', presumably while some sort of decrunching takes place. This is incredibly disruptive, and frequently degenerates into fiasco if, for example, after 'Holding on', you appear in the next stage and a baddy knocks you back through the door you just entered through, causing you to have to 'Hold on' again while the previous stage re-decrunches, go back through the door again, and then 'Hold on' once more while the stage you want decrunches again.

And that's *Batman Forever*. You walk through hundreds of identical-looking screens hitting hundreds of identical-looking characters, and getting more and more bored.

True, you've got a generous range of moves to try out, but after doing each one a couple of times you'll find it easier to stick with punches and kicks. And the various lame attempts to incorporate Riddler-type puzzles add nothing in the way of fun.

This is a humourless, soulless game. It hasn't been designed to be fun. It exists merely to fill boxes marked 'Batman Forever', and to sound impressive when its specifications are reeled off in board meetings. 24 Megabits! Motion-o-captured™ graphics! Eight levels! Special moves! No, no, no.

● **Jonathan Davies**

A fight with a baddy.

BATMAN FOREVER

Acclaim

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
85%	71%	55%
GAMELIFE	**OVERALL SCORE:**	
47%		61%

VERDICT: A great deal of effort has clearly been expended in making *Batman Forever* look the part. And, on paper at least, it seems to have all the ingredients of the ultimate scrolling beat-'em-up. But it's no fun.

AN INNOCENT FAÇADE

The characters don't just all look the same – some of them, as the credits reveal, really are the same bloke wearing slightly different shirts. And don't be fooled into thinking you're looking at two-inch-high versions of Val Kilmer, Jim Carrey and co. These are all people of whom YOU WILL NEVER HAVE HEARD.

This is not Jim Carrey.

A total stranger.

Not Nicole Kidman.

The last bloke again.

FOREVER

Before each level, you get to choose a pair of weapons for each character.

The thrilling confrontation with the Riddler. (He's the one on the left.) There are some levers to pull too.

THERE ARE TWO OF THEM

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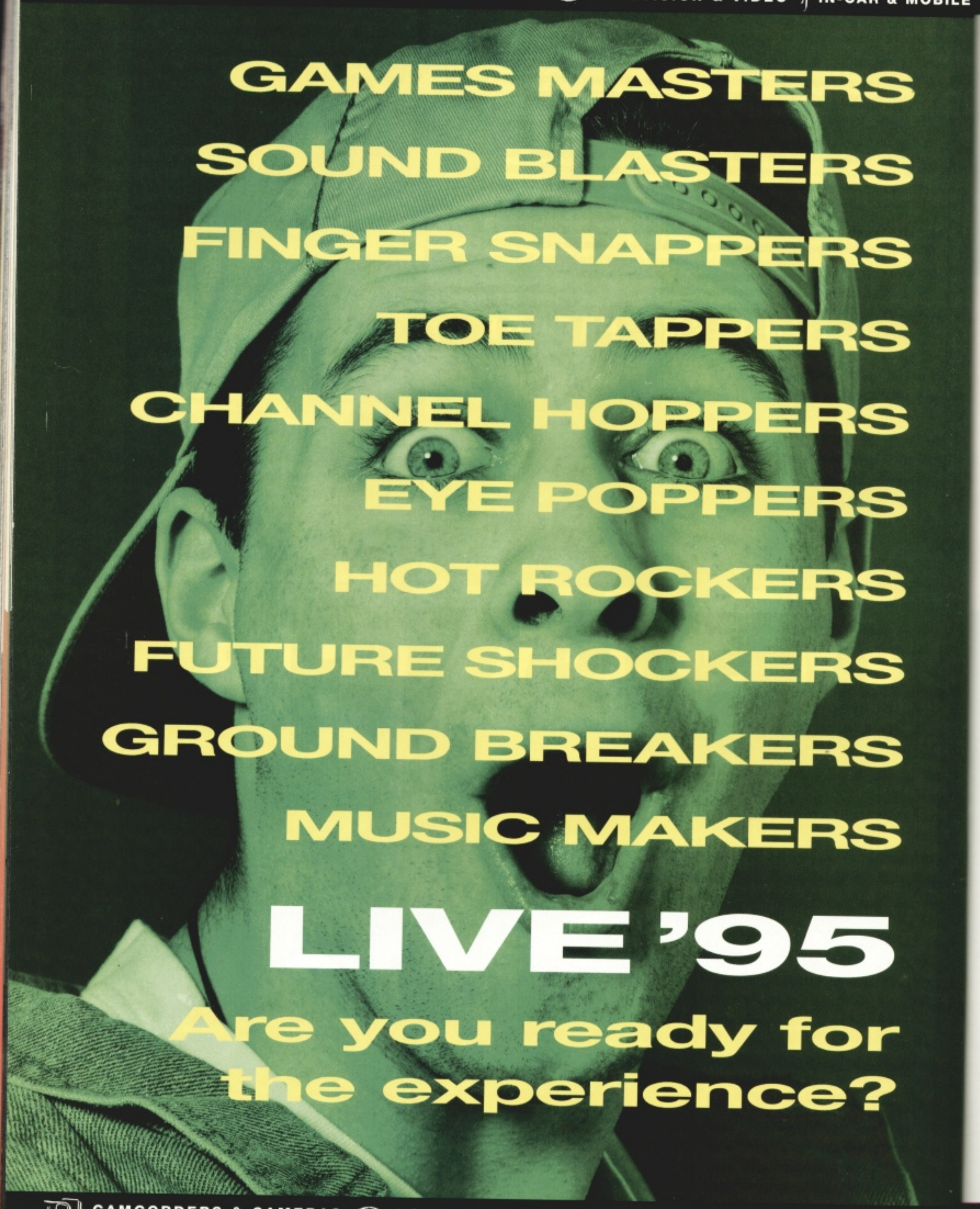

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UK Release

Game: WeaponLord
Publisher: Ocean
Developer: Visual
Price: £TBA
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 player
Cart ROM: 24 Mbits
Age Rating: 13+

WEAPON

In the Seventh Age of the Three Dark Kings There Came a Chaos Warrior From Vectis whose DemonSword, Clagshaker, etc., etc...

There's something elitist about *WeaponLord*. You get the distinct impression that James Goddard and his cohorts have devised this game purely because they can pull off 14 hit combos and laugh at anyone who takes them on. There's no speed option, just three difficulty levels: Hard, Bloody Hard and You've Got To Be Joking. Why? If I want to learn moves and fatalities, can't I choose a CPU opponent who ISN'T capable of six-hitters?

Goddard's creation of Dee Jay for Super *SFII* never guaranteed his ability to craft the perfect game engine, and he's made the professional's blunder of assuming you'll play along by his rules. But having finally worked out combos for Zorn, I was pretty annoyed to discover that hitting all the buttons randomly could be more effective. And the special thrust blocks (see *SP35*) are just too slow to implement unless you can accurately predict exactly what your opponent is about to do.

WeaponLord is also an instance where the graphics inhibit the gameplay. Some of these screenshots look excellent as stills, no question, but in the heat of battle – particularly when the playing style requires sprites to overlap almost constantly – both characters merge into a blur of muscle-lines and fleshtones. You can practically count off the frames of animation with your eyes, too (and considering there are only seven characters, where has all the ROM gone?). I think it's no coincidence that Capcom, more expert in these matters, has drifted in the opposite direction with bolder outlines and colours for its recent coin-ops.

Most grating of all is the end-game sequence, in which a multitude of designers are credited with the 'original

'Barbarian Master Warrior'
Weapons: Bastard Sword
How hard? "Korr can defeat four of his mates with just a dagger." And I quote from the top-quality prose of the manual, penned by GamePro's Slasher Quan.

At this point it appears our two heroes are battling it out in the close confines of a demon's bath tub.

HYPER-BORE-YA

Although it does feel like SFII in many respects, our intense playtesting uncovered certain 'idiosyncrasies' which might explain our reservations...

How did this cheap combo get through playtesting? Get in close with Zarak, crouch and hammer Backthrust for up to 14 unblockable hits.

Go on then, you tell us which limb belongs where and to whom. Incidentally, your chances of blocking correctly here are nil.

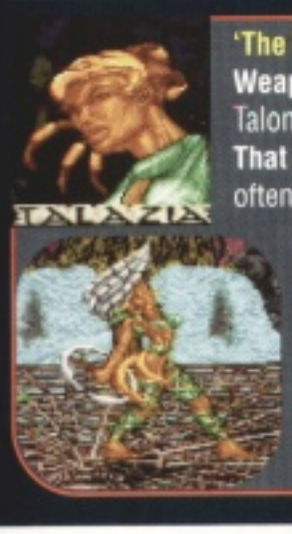
Sadly, with the right move you can expose Jen-Tai's knickers. Do ANY male game designers have lives, and girlfriends, I wonder?

A touch premature – the blood starts to fly before Zarak's axe actually hits Korr. Loading the dice a little, no?

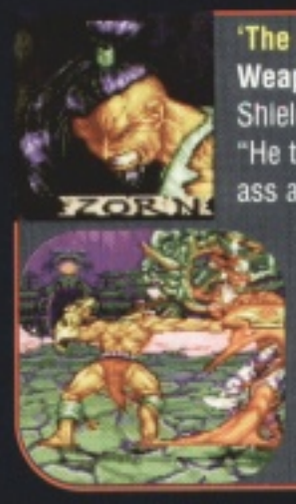
In 2-player mode, *WeaponLord* does have moments of gory greatness.

CROM'S BONES...

'The Bird of Prey'
Weapons: Claw Shield, Talon Blade
That manual, again: "She often climbs to the tops of the tallest trees and stares longingly into the sky." Perhaps Talazia was pondering why only warriors with a zed in their name have projectile capacity in *WeaponLord*.



'The Defiler'
Weapons: Ivory Axe, Skull Shield
"He thinks he is the baddest ass around." And anybody with half a brain can see that he's been possessed by his skull shield. No surprise in the end sequence there, then, but a recommended starting character.

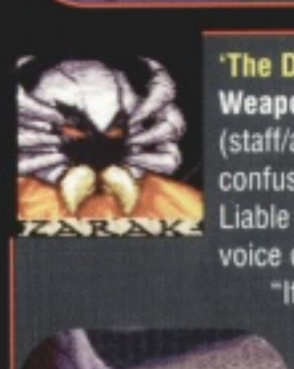


'Mistress of Death'
Weapons: Twin-bladed Staff
"She lives in a gigantic, ominous fortress atop a high hill, secluded from the rest of civilisation." A dark and mysterious warrior sorceress, Divada has sold her soul to settle the Mortgage From Hell.

'The Lone Wolf'
Weapon: Rock Warhammer, Bone Hook
There's ALWAYS a big ox with a hammer, and in *WeaponLord* it's Bane. "It is rumoured he killed a fearsome sabretooth wolf once with his bare hands, and now his face is shrouded by the wolf's mask." Ah, so it's not a rumour, then.

'The War Queen'
Weapons: Falcon (sic), Spiked Shield
"She usually does not kill her opponents, instead sparing their lives so that they may learn lessons from her and return to challenge her again." Er, isn't that a bit stupid?

'The DemonLord'
Weapons: Guillotine (staff/axe/spear confusion)
Liable to say 'Kill' in the voice of James Earl Jones. "It was during his time of conquest that the Demon heard what came to be known as the Prophecy..." Oh look, I really can't keep this up.



concepts' of the characters. Ha! There isn't an original concept in the entire game. Robert E. Howard was penning Conan novels back in the 20s and 30s, so every fantasy stereotype you see here is at least 60 years old. Yet they're all so similar to control – there's nothing like the difference between Honda and Dhalsim here.

And the final ignominy? We expected some playing twists from the use of weapons, but instead it's a case of spear and axe blows replacing punches and kicks. You can't lock swords and wrestle, or disarm an opponent, or shatter their blade, or chop up backgrounds, so there's actually more weapon play in *Samurai Shodown*.

Having said all that, I liked *WeaponLord* a lot more than many of my colleagues. The righteous *kerchang!* of steel on steel, the corny testosterone-laden voice-over, the chance to play keepsie uppies with your opponent's corpse after you've done them in – these things kept me entertained, if not convinced, for many hours and there are still rewards for mastering the system. But we were promised the gameplay of *SFII*, and it simply hasn't got it.

● **Zybor, Son of Groktar**

LORD

"What do you think of it so far?" "Ruggish!" (© Eric Morecambe c. 1974)

WEAPONLORD
Ocean

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
74%	68%	76%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	75%
60%		

VERDICT: Its better aspects are those that crib, imperfectly, from *Street Fighter* – sigh – but for all its terrible faults, it's not unamusing.

Use your existing special moves to perform fatalities.

Even when the round ends, you're free to keep hacking.

Police have found a new way of keeping trouble at bay during this year's summer solstice.

UK Release

Game: Primal Rage
Publisher: Time Warner Interactive
Developer: Bitmasters US
Price: £59.99
Release: August 31st
Players: 1 or 2
Cart ROM: 24 megabits

Thursday 17th August, 4.35pm: *Primal Rage* was granted the dubious honour of being the first title reviewed on BBC1's new 'cyber' series, *Total Reality*. The programme itself was laughable, as the Beeb's producers are clearly stuck in a time warp and honestly believe that a computer-generated oik in a baseball cap who says "Yo!", "Wicked!" and "Respect!" to her whining sidekick is just what 'ver kids' want to see. But they did at least take their reviewers seriously, and as a result *Primal Rage* didn't score more than 79%. Still a little generous, to my mind, but it makes a welcome alternative to *Movies, Games and Videos* overhyping even the most miserable dog of a game as if it's a ninety-five percenter.

Let's face it, *Primal Rage* was never much cop in the first place.

I was initially fascinated to see Atari returning to the arcade scene but, like many of the games they've hoisted on the poor old Jaguar, it's yet another blood-splattered digitised beat-'em-up that only superficially captures the spirit of its peers.

This coin-op conversion was handled by Bitmasters, who provided us with the excellent SNES incarnation of *Rampart* a few years ago. It's not their best work: those selling-point graphics just aren't up to scratch, and you only have to compare *Primal Rage* with *MK3*, or even *MK1*, to see better digitisation. There's something rough and ill-defined about the sprites, and consequently the contacts, that gives the game a very woolly feel.

You'd also expect a few more concessions for a home conversion, but there's no infinite time setting – gah! All those unfairly curtailed two-player bouts! – and just a handful of preset button configurations, none of which accommodated my slightly unorthodox joystick *[... – Ed]*.

But the most common complaint levelled at the arcade game was that every special move needed at least two buttons, if not four or six, to be held down before you could spin the stick. It was a deliberate attempt to say "hey, we're different from *Streetfighter*!", even if it meant the discomfort, RSI and eventual finger loss of the players involved. It's been retained for the SNES version, and whether you thumb the joypad or hold it 'piano' fashion like the Mottster (blimey, another insight into the playing habits of the team) you'll realise that they've missed the point somewhere along the line.

Sportingly, it's impossible to kill a blocking opponent with unblockable damage. The worshippers are another great idea, and whether you're gulping them down for a health boost before the final battle or playing kickabout with them in head-to-head they provide some of the best laughs *Primal Rage* has to offer.

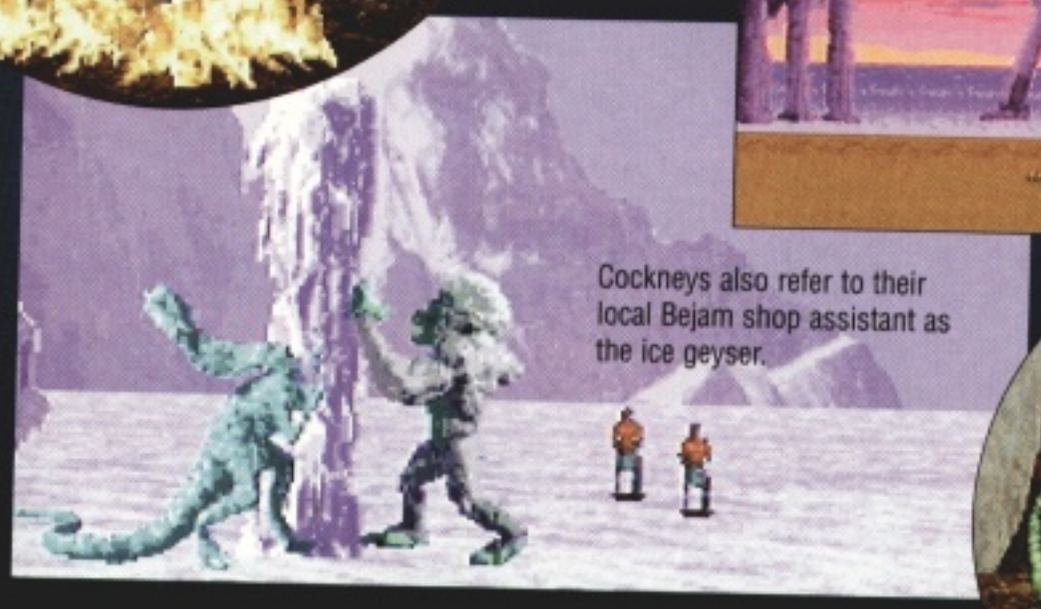
Your computer opponents are so prehistorically dimwitted, however, that you'll beat the highest difficulty setting on your very first attempt; and with a mere seven characters the two-player game gets pretty repetitive too. Even if you love dinosaurs so much that you can stomach Barney, there's simply no longevity here.

● **Zy Nicholson**

PRIMAL

Two bloodcrazed dinosaurs tearing each other limb from limb could rarely be described as dull. Rarely.

Most forest fires are started through sheer carelessness.



ARMADON

The advantage of being a 'Tristegasaurtops' is that you can curl up under your protective horned shell and forget about the troubles of the world outside. Just those everyday dinosaur troubles, you know, like the enormous carnivore who was lunging jaws agape at your soft brown underbelly and will hopefully now impale itself on your spiny spines.

SUPER PLAY'S THEOSAURUS

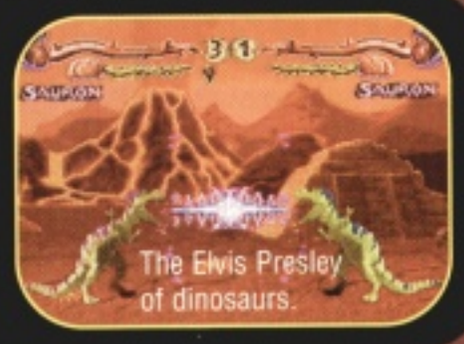
When a vast meteor crashes into the Earth, it almost annihilates civilisation and awakens seven prehistoric creatures imprisoned for millions of years.

Worshipped by the few surviving humans, they battle for supremacy and control of the new planet 'Urth'.

Of course, the saurian characters are only dinosaur-like gods and not true dinosaurs at all. Which is just as well, because it means they can breathe fire and teleport without howls of complaint from leading palaeontologists.

SAURON

Tyrannosaurus Rex, the king of the lizards. Whatever you think of the game, seeing him chomp on a careless human being is an unnerving experience. So unnerving that you simply have to eat another one, but this time with your face closer to the TV trying to make out more detail.



The Elvis Presley of dinosaurs.

BLIZZARD

The Dave Lee Travis.

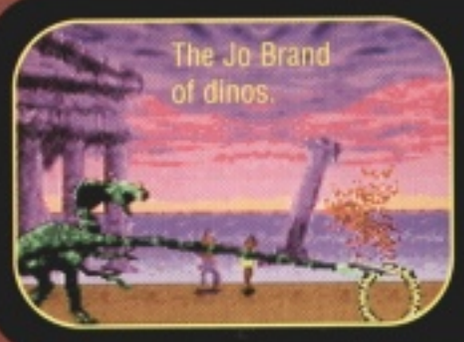
"A large, hairy Kong ape" whose swift but long-ranged punches make him a devastating attacker. Blizzard also boasts the most melodramatic death throes of any videogame character ever, so get that fatality right or you'll have to sit and watch him ham it up.

CHAOS

The Fart of Fury, the Power Puke, the Flying Butt-Slam: surely these aren't special moves, they're episodes of Ren and Stimpy? Chaos is a hairy Kong-like ape who – hey, wait a minute...

The Billy Connolly of prehistoric monsters.

VERTIGO


The Jo Brand of dinos.

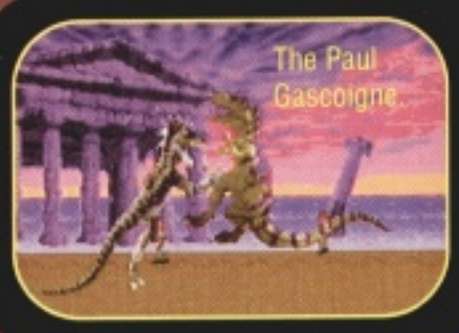
It's not immediately obvious, but Vertigo is the token female character. She's a 'cobrasaur', and thus lures opponents with her undulating, hypnotic, femme fatale black widow ways before poisoning them. There's an entire case study of misogyny and male insecurity here, psychology students.

DIABLO

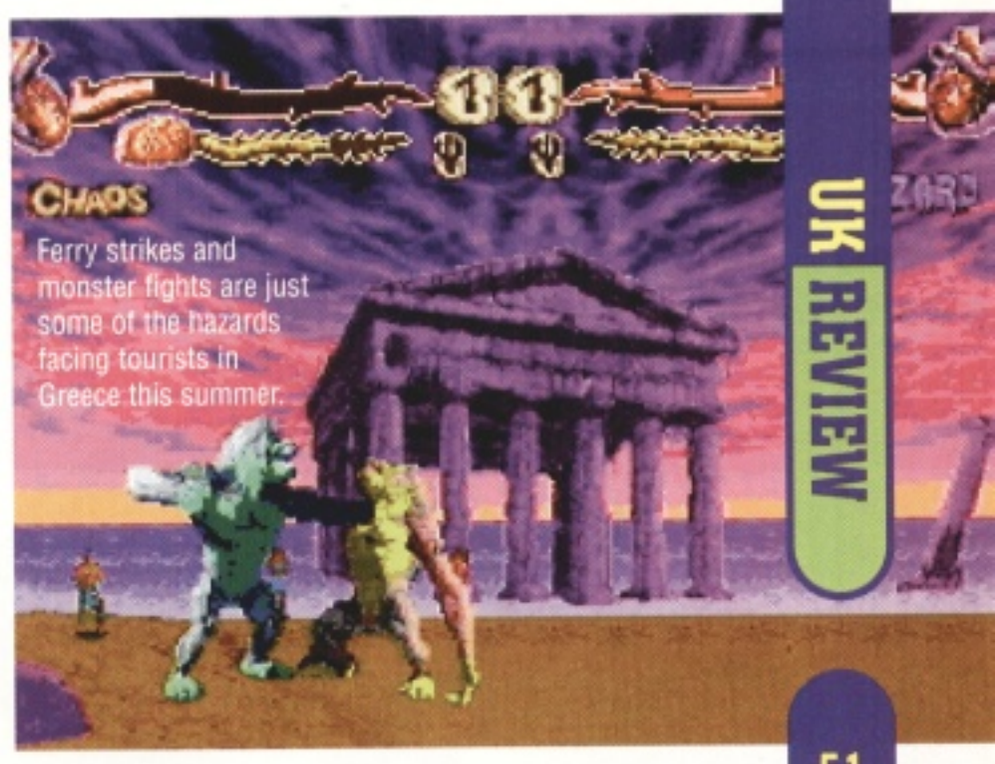
Diablo is described as a small and fast red Allosaur, but his size and proportions are so uncannily identical to Sauron that you begin to smell something ichthyonic going on. Surely they can't be one and the same sprite in – gasp – different colours?

The Chris Evans.

TALON


The Paul Gascoigne.

One for the Raptor fans, this speedy Deinonychus leaps in with claws a-flashing. He looks small but he's everywhere, stepping on your face and slashing your tail. Think of an angry Joe Pesci with scales. Keep thinking scales, then mentally fade out Joe Pesci and fade in a mental image of a Deinonychus. That's Talon.



Ferry strikes and monster fights are just some of the hazards facing tourists in Greece this summer.

If you don't make regular visits to a pedicurist, you could find yourself in a similar situation. One slip of your big toe and you could have a man's arm off.

PRIMAL RAGE

PRIMAL RAGE
Time Warner Interactive

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
79%	70%	65%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	60%
65%		

VERDICT: A very average conversion of a very average beat-'em-up. It's calculated, yes, but with dinosaurs, gore and morbid humour it does at least pull all the right strings.

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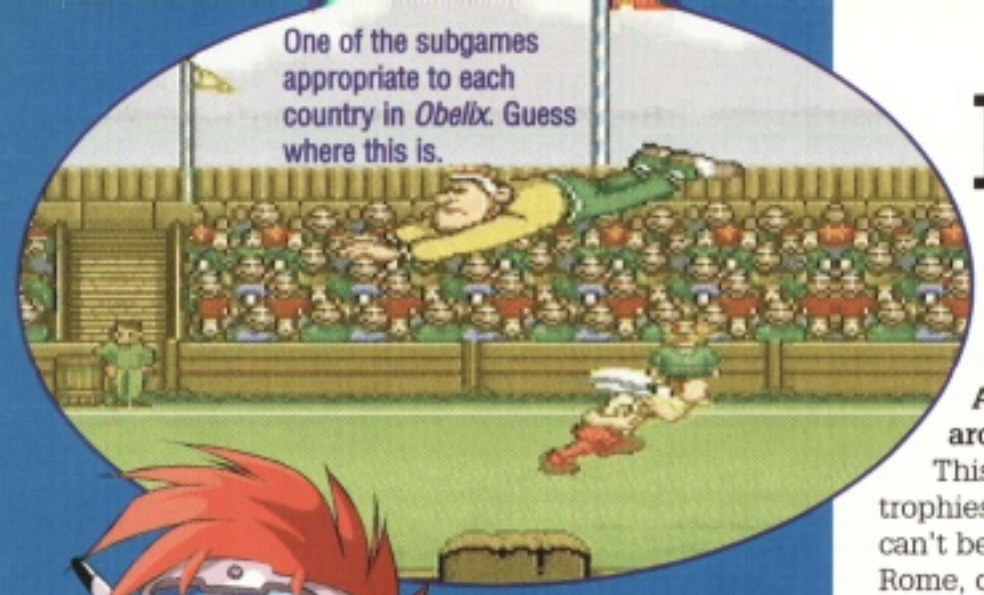
OBELIX

Peter Sallis should never have played Asterix on the radio.



OBELIX
Infogrames

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80%	65%	59%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	60%
58%		

VERDICT: You'll either complete it out of sheer determination or overwhelming boredom. Either way, you'll wonder why you bothered.

Infogrames have gone to great trouble to make *Obelix* as faithful to the original Goscini and Uderzo graphic novels as possible, using a fairly well thought-out plot to build a game of scenes from Asterix and Obelix's travels around Europe.

This time they're collecting trophies to prove to Caesar that they can't be crushed by the might of Rome, calling on England, Germany, Switzerland and Egypt, and being hindered by those pesky Romans every step of the way.

Yup, it looks like the real thing – the graphics are beautifully drawn, with smooth frames, from a Roman face buckling behind Obelix's fat arms, to a pair of sandals flopping loosely to the floor.

Our two heros move exactly as you'd expect them to, and the scenery has a clean, simplistic though impressive feel. Every move has the same characterization the original comic authors used. To complete the set there's a two-player mode, making the game Asterix *and* Obelix, or as a solo player you can swap characters anyway, making this Asterix. Ho hum.

This is one of those games where you have to take damage. You'll know the guy's going to jump out from behind the tree, you know where he'll land, and you'll know what he'll do when he gets there. But you still won't kill him without taking a hit. Running into someone punching continually sometimes works, and that's the best chance you're going to get. The Romans stop just short of punching distance, and when you move in on them you get stabbed. Instantly. You could jump over them, but if you even scrape them you'll take a hit. You're dropping an invincible bloke the size of Luxembourg on a weedy little rookie, and *you* take the damage. What's worse, you'll take enough damage to make sure you won't survive the level by a long way. Too much damage. Too often. Within two levels you'll start avoiding lone Romans wherever possible. That's not Obelix.

The problem is that when you remove the Romans from the equation, you're left travelling through levels of platforms (nearly always left to right), seeing and doing very little. You'll occasionally come across a catapult, primitive see-saw lift, ladder or such like, but there's never any challenge. *Obelix* is a game based on beating up Romans, and that's the bit the designers got wrong. The extra, charged move you can use is a variant on your normal punch, and it does more damage, but by the time you've charged it up, your target has assumed a position one pixel out of reach, and you can't move while keeping the charge.

In short, Asterix fans will shout "Wahoo – it's Asterix", then wonder where the game is. Asterix virgins will just wonder where the game is. The playtesters must have been wondering where the game was, because they can't have seen it.

● **Simon Forrester**

INTERLUDIX

There're no bosses in *Obelix* – the point of the stories is that nothing can beat the duo's measured violence. To break up the levels and slap you awake, Infogrames have included subgames to master. The first is the English rugby scene, which involves ducking and diving telepathically with a ball to score tries, the second is a flashback to the early days of button-hammering running games, and the third is a chance to run with the bulls in Spain. Unfortunately, the variety lasts just long enough to drag you back to the concious world, then the game returns to its mind-numbing normality.

"No – this will all have to be chopped down if you want another lane, mate."

That'll be your move, then.

Oho.

It looks nice, but it's effectively just a large amount of boring space.

You could look left and right before you try to cross the road, but you're always going to be mashed by the chariot hiding off-screen.

And look where those kind designers make you land. No fun.

UK Release

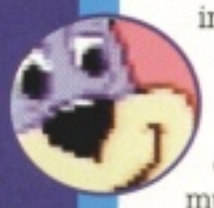
Game: Asterix and Obelix
Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: In-house
Price: £44.99
Release: October
Players: One or two
Cart ROM: 12Mbits

TURBO TOONS

Well, at least the graphics didn't have to be too ambitious.

HANNA-BARBERA TRIVIA

- Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera made a name for themselves in the 30s, creating *Tom & Jerry* cartoons for the cinema. The quality of those early efforts was never recaptured.
- When they moved into TV production their first cartoon was *Huckleberry Hound*, which appeared in 1959. It introduced the cheaper process of semi-animation.
- The theme songs for Hanna-Barbera cartoons were written by the wife of one of the partners. Explaining why the contrived awfulness of their lyrics was never called into question.
- *Top Cat* (1963) was renamed *Boss Cat* in the UK because a proprietary brand of cat food had already trademarked the name.
- America's Top Ten presenter Casey Casem, the voice behind Shaggy, is to be blamed for the invention of Scrappy Doo. Eternal damnation doubtless awaits him.
- The only decent line of dialogue spoken by Susan Arquette in the whole of *True Romance* is "Okey Dokey, Doggie Daddy" – the catchphrase of Augie Doggie, whose name is given to Turbo Toons' hidden set of tracks.
- The Sarge in *Hong Kong Phooey* and Botch in the *Hair Bear Bunch* are not only voiced by the same actor but use exactly the same "Ooh, ooh, ooh" vocal mannerisms.

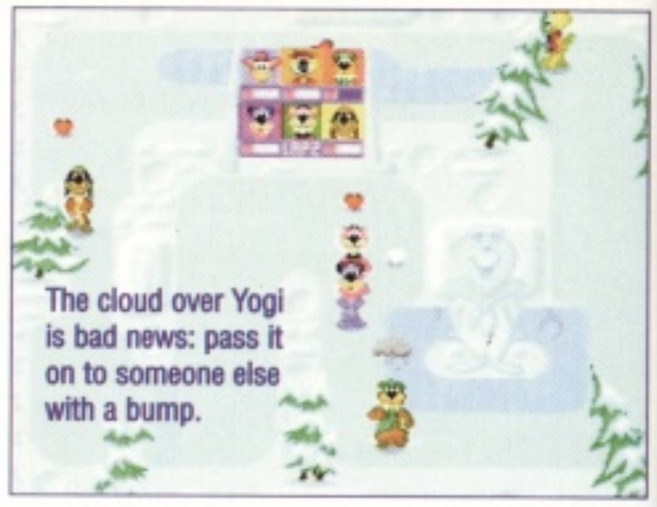


Considering the number of famous characters generated by the Hanna Barbera studios, let me ask you a surprisingly tough question: can you think of a single quality cartoon boasting their name? See, it's better to remember *Scooby Doo* or *Stop The Pigeon* than to actually watch them again. *The Flintstones* was a banal canned laughter sitcom, *Top Cat* was *Sergeant Bilko* for kids, and everything was done on a budget so tight that the image of a cartoon character walking past the same background tree five times in ten seconds became the studio's unofficial trademark.

It was when the Mottster and I were sifting for nuggets at a videogame industry trade show over a year ago that *Turbo Toons* first came to our attention. Although it was a very early unfinished version, its enthusiastic silliness and five-player multi-tap compatibility was enough to divert us from our beeline for the bar.

Each toon has different attributes for factors such as top speed, acceleration and grip, based on rather arbitrary interpretations. Besides direction and turbo controls, you also have a jump with which to dodge obstacles or bump the opposition: when successfully bumped, a toon is forced to stop and spin on the spot for a couple of seconds. This little feature alone is what raises it above simple speed racing and adds the necessary competitive edge for five-way play. Each course covers just one screen, so you never find yourself too far from another toon and the inevitable crowding leads to some frantic bumping for first place.

From the top: Yogi Bear, Snagglepuss, Huckleberry Hound, Quick Draw McGraw, Top Cat and Hong Kong Phooey. As you ought to know.



However, after half an hour you just can't help thinking that it's all rather insubstantial. Had it been one game in a multi-player compendium, like *Tiny Toon Sports*, then a sub-level of this calibre would have been acceptable. Devoting an entire cartridge to it seems hopelessly indulgent.

It's a real no-frills effort too. The same cartoon sound effect is used over and over in a doomed attempt to distract you from the my-first-CasioTone music and lack of samples, and there's not much of a treat awaiting those who complete a league. As it stands, *Turbo Toons* offers half an hour's top jollies for five people with a multi-tap. Not enough to justify a purchase by any means.

● **Zy Nicholson**

Top Cat skips past Wally Gator with more luck than McGraw.

Benny the Ball's manhole emergence drives Phooey into the splosh.

UK Release

Game: Turbo Toons
Publisher: Empire
Developer: In-house
Price: £34.99
Release: Out now
Players: 1 to 5 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 4 meg

TURBO TOONS
Empire

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
50%	15%	55%
GAMELIFE	**OVERALL SCORE:**	
20%		42%

VERDICT: Initially very amusing but, much like that looping background scenery of every Hanna Barbera cartoon, it's too simple and becomes repetitive far too quickly.

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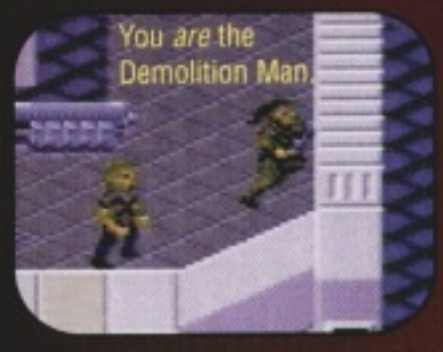
LOOK AT IT THIS WAY...

What's especially welcome in *Demolition Man* is its willingness to try something different. This it does with levels presented à la *True Lies*, setting you scooting off around a building, taking out, well, lots of stuff – in the museum, for example, you can blow away glass mannequin cases just for the hell of it.

Again, these bits are hampered by excessive slowdown, but they serve their purpose – that of giving the game as a whole an unpredictable rhythm – very well.



***Demolition Man* has got one of the most exciting opening bits I've ever seen. Set against a dark and moody backdrop, the rear portion of futuristic helicopter edges on from the top corner of the screen. Then you – as Sly's rough-and-ready coppa from the movie – rush out of its back and, attached to a bungee line, drop and dangle like a sack of spuds while ripping into the bad guys below with a pleasingly butch piece of firearmage. Imagine the bungee level from *Earthworm Jim* shot up with two rippling armful's worth of testosterone and you'll get the drift.**

The down side of such a ripping intro is that it sets up the game for a level of quality that it never really sustains. Detached from the bungee line, the bulk of the action tumbles down the well-worn path trodden previously by the likes of *Contra Spirits* and *Robocop vs Terminator*, having more in common with the latter game than Konami's timeless thriller.

There are some inventive dabs of colour later in the game – the zip-lines level in particular is a stand-out section, seeing you screaming down wires like a demented Gladiators contestant – but *Demolition Man* can prove tiresome, mainly because it's patchily put together.

It feels fudgy, for a start, and that's a punishable offence in a fast-action game such as this. As I was getting into the game, during some of its busiest moments I found myself squinting, gritting my teeth and just hoping for the best – it certainly doesn't have the razor-sharp feel of *Contra*.

And it's been a long time since I've seen slowdown run to such almighty proportions. Although intermittent, the slowdown really spoils the flow of the game, and to deal with it you have to work in slow motion yourself, carefully pressing the right things on the 'pad in time to the grating action. Not good.

Though flawed, *Demolition Man* is nevertheless entertaining. It certainly tries to demonstrate that stuffing a bunch of code into a License-o-Matik™ machine – which is how, say, *Judge Dredd* was produced – is not the only way to produce a game based on a film. And that alone deserves a few extra marks.

● **Tony Mott**

DEMOLITION MAN

Remember the movie? Now's your chance to 'be' the Sly guy himself...

UK Release

Game: Demolition Man
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: In-house
Price: £39.99
Release: September
Players: One
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit

DEMOLITION MAN
Acclaim

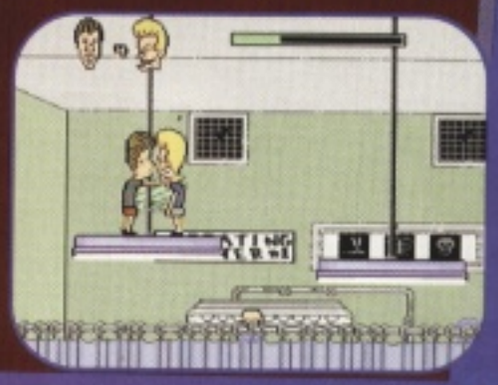
GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80%	79%	70%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	75%
72%		

VERDICT: It's crude in places, shaky in others and certainly has frustrating moments, but *Demolition Man* pulls itself back from the brink by including a number of inventive touches.

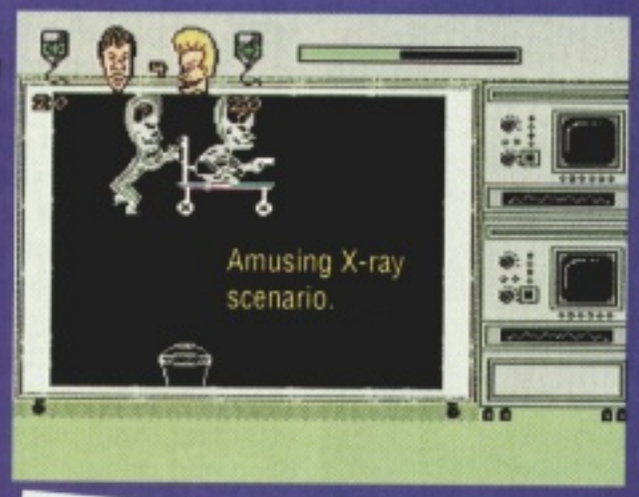
FARTKNOCKER!

Tongues down throats…

True to form, the two Bs indulge in some rather un-PC behaviour throughout the game. Pressing up on the D-pad makes your character poke his tongue out (which is meant to be used as a way of collecting falling foodstuff), and you can even chop the other player in the throat, just for the hell of it. We smiled at these bits.



Fists in throats…



BEAVIS AND BUTTHEAD

Huh, huh. Let's, like, review this without doing any smutty gags.

BEAVIS AND BUTTHEAD
Viacom New Media

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
60%	58%	43%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	39%
37%		

VERDICT: Committed B and B fans – if such people exist – may get something out of this, but, as the gruesome twosome themselves would no doubt say, this sucks.

Let's just make this clear: some comic book/cartoon characters are ideal for use in video games, and some patently are not. Look at, say, the X-Men – they drip action from every pore, storm around duffing over bad guys in their muscle-hugging costumes and have all manner of spangly special powers – they're absolutely ideal (er, though perhaps we should conveniently forget Capcom's failure to do them justice for a moment). Beavis and Butthead, on the other hand, are simply plebs. They don't have any offensively huge weapons, no super abilities, and spend most of their time watching television, for Pete's sake.

So it's little surprise that this game is of the pumpular persuasion. What we have here is a shoddily designed affair that offers roughly the same entertainment quota as a bag of rotting potatoes.

It's a weird fish of a thing: part scrolling beat-'em-up, part platformer, with all parts influenced heavily by the aged *Bart's Nightmare* (a game, I hope you agree, that has to go down as *Super Play's* most overrated game ever – 91%? What *were* we thinking?).

As Beav or Butt – you can switch between the two by pressing select during play, or even take part in a simultaneous two-player game – you take out bad guys with collectible weapons (water pistols, boxing gloves on poles, etc.) as you make your way through sections such as a school and a hospital, occasionally having to jump over buckets or duck under skateboarders and suchlike and so on.

It's all predictable stuff, put together with such low regard for the player's enjoyment that it's almost criminal. One particular section springs to mind, in the Pet Store you have to traverse a tank full of piranha and jellyfish. It's stop-start all the way as you try to swat the sealife around you and it goes on and on and on and on until your mind eventually begins to melt.

I'll put it this way. On the game's title screen you can press either the D-pad to make Beavis go 'heh-heh' or any of the buttons to make Butthead go 'huh-huh', complete with animation faithful to the cartoon, and I got more fun from annoying people in the office with this than I did from the game itself.

UK Release
Game: Beavis and Butthead
Publisher: Viacom New Media
Developer: In-house
Price: £39.99
Release: Out now
Players: One or two
Cart ROM: 8Mbits

● **Tony Mott**

EDGE

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SNES TECH & GAMING ANSWERS

GAMEFREAK

By Tony Mott

Do you ever lie awake at night, pondering over exactly why Nintendo designed the Super Nintendo's joypads the way they did? Or, during breakfast, do you try to predict which RPGs are on their way to the West by reading tea leaves? Then give it up. I'm here for you. Here, take a seat at my gaming clinic...

From Tony Doyle, Georges Quay, Cork

Q Please tell me when the following games will appear in the US: *Ladystalker*, *Chrono Trigger*, *Breath Of Fire 2*, *Sim City 2000* and *Wonder Project J*.

A *Chrono Trigger* will be out on the first day of September, but I can't opine on *BOF2* or *Sim City 2000*. *Ladystalker* and *Wonder Project J* won't actually be appearing in the West as far as I know.

Q Do Nintendo have an HQ in Ireland?

A No.

Q Why can't I purchase a SNES mouse on its own?

A You can, just not an official Nintendo version. Fire supply their 'Rebel' mouse for £19.99. Give them a shout on 01302 751428/750285.

Q If you unplug your joypads or multitap while the SNES is on, can it damage your machine? (I had to buy a new machine the other day because it stopped working with some games – I tried to clean it but to no avail.)

A No, but I guess if you can avoid doing it, you should.

Q When are Sony releasing *Super Elite* for the SNES? Also, what about *Micro Machines 2*? (Mugo Drive owners are now getting *Micro Machines 2 '96*!)

A Sony aren't actually publishing any more SNES games because all their efforts are going into the PlayStation. I gather the game got into quite an advanced state of development, though, because I remember the programmers being particularly pleased with what they'd achieved in 3D without having to use the Super FX chip. The project's lying dormant now, I'd say. Regarding *MM2*, a source told me a while back that a SNES version is indeed in production, but there's no publisher tied up yet. A shame, cos it's a very fine game.

Micro Machines 2 may yet get a SNES release – very good news.

From H. Rochester, Kent:

Q Could you tell me how long a battery in a cart with BB RAM lasts? Is there any way I could replace the battery once it has run out, or is it a kind of RAM chip?

A The popular belief is five years, but I wouldn't take that as gospel. The actual gubbins inside a BB RAM cart consists of a supplementary RAM chip along with a Hitachi Maxell CR2032 T battery, and replacing it would be a tricky task.

Q With this in mind, is it worth buying some of the older BB RAM carts second-hand? (I'm thinking particularly of *Super Mario World and All Stars*.)

A Yes – we've got both the carts you mention, both bought yonks ago, and they still save and retrieve games perfectly.

Q A certain publication said that *FFIII* is not to be released for the UK SNES along with *Might and Magic 3* and *Wonder Project J*. Is this true? (I also feel it should be brought to readers' attention that they had the nerve to call it, and I quote, 'too ka-ka to be released.' Outrageous.)

A Neither *Might and Magic 3* and *Wonder Project 3* will make it over, but don't write off *FFIII*.

Q Any news on an American release of *Tactics Ogre*?

A There's still no Japanese release date as yet, so don't be holding that breath, H.

Q Why does Mog act frightened and Relm shake her finger before each fight?

A All the characters have a range of expressions as you know, and they pop up all over the place – it's just a 'personality' thing. What a weird question.

From Gary Evans, Llawidloes, Powys:

Q Is there such a game as *Alien Vs Predator*

DAYDREAMING

I felt it time to bring back the area where you wax lyrical about your game ideas, notions and concepts. First up to the rostrum is someone who didn't put their name on their paper:

"What about a Square Soft driving game, in which Mog the Moogle, a Chocobo, Tina, Lock, Cyan and a Blue Blob would run into shops like pit stops, and fight big monsters on the road. Secret weapons, such as a mayonnaise gun, can be collected, and when you defeat another driver they'd have to ride your bike, which makes it slower..."

Hmm. Mayonnaise gun? And I thought Blue Blobs were from the *Dragon Quest* series. I can't see this one catching on, anon.

Dean Howard of Barnsley is next, with his enthusiastic depiction of a new Batman RPG, presented isometric 3D style:

"Instead of the usual RPG formula of kill-baddie-gain-attributes, you could employ Alfred to research and build weapons, devices or amour to enhance Batman's powers. A two-player Robin option could also be considered, or you could switch between Batman and Robin if they get split up.

The game map would range from Wayne Manor and the Batcave up to Arkham Asylum and the Dockland areas. All the familiar places could be here – the cathedral, cemetery, park, warehouses and the city streets, using the Batvehicles to move quickly about town and the grappling gun to traverse rooftops. You could break into houses (through the windows, in true Batman style) and tap their phones or plant hidden cameras to gain information.

Character interaction would come through people like Commissioner Gordon, Detective Bullik, street thugs and criminals head in Arkham Asylum. In a situation similar to what *Super Play* showed with *Secret Of Mana 2*, there could be proper time zones, then you could 'be' Bruce Wayne by day and question people in this seemingly innocent guise.

If done properly, and a true representation of Gotham is achieved – all the villains included, with team-ups between not only the villains but with Batman and Catwoman, or people like Azrael or Nightwing, and jailbreak, bank jobs, car chases, punch ups, clues, riddles, gadgets and other stuff – this game could be excellent.

And of course Batman's world would need to have smoke, rain and everything."

Now, doesn't that sound like a sackful more fun than a scrolling beat-'em-up? Yes it does, and it's enough to earn him an Action Replay 2. Hurrah!

Finally, there's Tony Mines' *Mortal Kombat Kart* idea. It's a bit derivative, but his illustration was so cool I had to print it here. Keep the dreams rolling, fellow gamefans.

Yes, it's *Mortal Kombat Kart*.

because a few years ago there were some screenshots in a mag. If it does exist, is it any good?
A It does exist, and it's about as pleasant as having a nasty bout of piles removed by a short-sighted surgeon (with a rusty scalpel).

From Richard Melville, Exeter:
Q That *Nintendo Sound Factory* thing – I saw something similar on the BBC2 programme, The Net. It was created by an artist and looked pretty damned funky – so where the hell is it?
A I rarely get to a TV apart from at weekends, so I didn't see it. I haven't heard anything on this since me old haggis-munching mate Frank O' Connor visited Nintendo of Japan ages ago. Reckon it's been dropped from their schedule.
Q Have you heard of any groups that have started an *FFIII* or *Mana* dice-and-paper game like the US one mentioned in the *FFIII* column in issue 33? If not, could someone perhaps get their Mac and scanner and produce a version, or perhaps a card game.
A Nope – I haven't moved in those circles since my Saturday afternoons down at A Parallel Universe in my early youth. I was a right Zy once upon a time, y'know. Sigh.
Q Whatever happened to the Wil Overton-designed SP shirts?
A They were so, so, *so* limited edition that we only know of one in existence. It's now worth about £50 on the open market.

From Neil Bailey, Kirby-Cross, Essex:
Q What happened to these games: *Powerslide, FX Darts, Transformers, Steven Segal, Impossible Mission, Shadowblade, Atom, Thunderbirds, Sound Factory* and *Super Virtual Boxing*?
A In that order, then: It's currently being redone from start to finish; never heard of it; Argonaut have dropped it; deader than Segal's career; Microprose have it officially 'on hold' (don't count on it ever appearing); don't know about this one either; nope, stumped here too; didn't this come out in Japan a few years back?; see the Melvillester's question; Christ, where've you got these bloody game names from? *Super Virtual Boxing* is a mystery as well.
Q Are any of these RPGs going to get an English language translation: *Aquatallion, Monster Maker 3, Shogun Warrior*...
A I'll have to cut you short there. Have a gander at Fantasy Quest for an update on all English-speaking RPGs on their way.

From Andrew 'Andy' Crane, Bournemouth, Dorset:
Q How exactly does the Super Gameboy work? It has extra edge connectors, so I would assume that it has a co-processor inside it.
A Yes, the device actually includes the same Z80 processor that you'll find in a Game Boy. There's also co-ordination chippery in there, and gubbins dedicated to the display. It's actually a pretty simple set-up, really – just check out one of those newish translucent-case Game Boys to see how little's going on behind the scenes.
Q Why did Nintendo put in the border animations?
A Because they are Nintendo, not Sega or any other run-of-the-mill videogames outfit.

From Gareth Yeates, Co. Meath, Eire:
Q Will there be a *Ridge Racer* style racing game on the Ultra 64?
A Yes, though I can't tell you what it is yet.

READERS' TOP TEN

Wa-hey! The true gamers are finally making themselves known with some very tasteful top tens. I didn't think anyone else rated the Fantasy Zone series as much as I do, but *FZ2* is Mark Hogg's fave ever game after the coin-op version of Tempest. Tapper, another underrated classic, was also there, so he's obviously been around the block a few times.

Adrian Arnase almost won a prize with his comprehensively argued top ten, which features such delights as *Super Sprint, Outrun* and *Flying Shark*. Except his number one choice, *Combat School*, ruined things totally. I've always seen it as one of Konami's weakest moments.

So an Action Replay 2 goes to Tony Doyle, whose list includes *The Great Escape, Back 2 Skool* and *Slapfight*. Well done fella, as a certain mag is wont to say.

Collating all your tens is a tricky task, but here's how we're looking:
1 *Zelda III* – Nintendo – SNES
2 *Street Fighter II* (various versions) – Capcom – SNES/coin-op
3 *Super Mario Kart* – Nintendo – SNES
4 *Super Metroid* – Nintendo – SNES
5 *Super Mario World* – Nintendo – SNES
6 *Secret Of Mana* – Nintendo – SNES
7 *Tetris* – BPS – Game Boy/SNES
8 *Final Fantasy III* – Square Soft – SNES
9 *Virtua Racing* – Sega – coin-op
10 *Donkey Kong '94* – Nintendo – Game Boy

Not surprising to see no less than four Shigs productions in there, and it's good that *FFIII* is getting recognition at last. The slightly less mainstream games are bubbling around outside of this lot, with classic coin-ops like *Bubble Bobble* and *Pacland* popping up.

Give me more – I want a top ten with each Gamefreak letter from now on.

Q Will a *Mario* game be released with the Ultra 64?
A Yes, but I doubt it'll be bundled with the machine.
Q Will *Secret Of Mana 3* ever be released and if so, on what format will it appear?
A Hey, I'm not Mystic Meg, mate. If 2 is successful on the SNES, and I can't see it not being, then the third game will get SNESage first, I'd have thought.
Q Is *FIFA* likely to come out on the Ultra 64?
A EA are working on all the worthwhile new formats, so it's bound to appear in time. (It'll look nothing like the SNES *FIFA*, though.)

From Michael Shields, Co. Down, Ireland
Q Will any of the actors out of *Mortal Kombat* (the game) be featuring in the forthcoming movie?
A No, the only game-related characters that appear in the movie are Ed Boon and John Tobias (the game developers), who, it's said, have itty bitty cameo roles. Egos, eh? Cuh.

From James Plummer, Southmead, Avon:
Q Do arcade machines run at 60Hz or 50Hz?
A 60Hz.
Q If they do run at 60Hz, would it be possible to get a SCART lead connected to the lead at the back of the monitor so that you could plug your SNES into it?
A Well, yes, but it's not an easy undertaking.
Q Finally, did *Final Fantasy Legend 1, 2* and *3* ever get released over here?
A Yes, although not in the sort of numbers of something like, say, the *Super Mario* series.

From Philip Doherty, Manchester:
Q My mate says that a SNES version of the Game Boy *Zelda* will appear. Is this true?
A Ooh, I'm always wary of questions that start out with, 'My mate says...' *Zelda: Link's Awakening* is the chief reason behind many Super Game Boy sales, so Nintendo are hardly likely to put it out as a dedicated SNES version.
Q Will there ever be a *Zelda* all-in-one cartridge, *Mario All Stars*-style?
A I said they wouldn't do *Killer Instinct* and they did, so I'll say no to this as well, and hopefully you'll get what you want.
Q If *Mystic Quest* on the Game Boy is the prequel to *Secret Of Mana*, then what is the SNES *Mystic Quest*?
A It was merely a name pulled out of the creative hat for Square of America's project. It's not related to the Japanese-developed series.
Q I already have *Zelda, Mana* and GB *Zelda* – any advice on what I should look for next?
A Look for a US machine with *FFIII* so you can start getting into turn-based RPGs.

From someone whose name I've lost:
Q In issue 34 there was a pic of a SFC PAL convertor – what does it actually do?
A It allows a 60Hz machine to run on a 50Hz television through its RF socket.
Incidentally, I've had some letters concerning where to get hold of PAL boosters and I think the senders got hold of the wrong end of the stick. The point with Tony Mills' model was that it featured stereo L and R outputs, whereas the more common varieties do not. I know where to get normal ones from (Fire, for example), it was a source for the unusual variety that has evaded me, so no more letters unless you know of a supplier of the stereo version.
Q Do any of the ideas in Daydreaming ever get used for games?
A Not as far as I'm aware.
Q Will there be any NU64 games involving a VR-style headset?
A With VR supposedly the future of entertainment and the Ultra 64 with the balls to actually provide a convincing 3D environment the answer's got to be yes, but don't ask me when.
Q Is the Ultra 64 really going to be black? It reminds me too much of the Mega Drive.
A Nintendo have hinted at a possible colour change. I'd like something really individualistic, personally, perhaps British racing green? No?

ANY QUESTIONS?

Then send them to the one and only Gamefreak. He puffs on the pipe of knowledge here:

Gamefreak, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

MODE 7

By DANNY WALLACE

CALLING ALL CHEATS, CRACKERS, AND GAME-FREAKS!

Life at *Super Play* is a happy one. As soon as the day begins, we're cheerily spending our time helping people. We like to help each other, for example. And we like to help the chimps in the office next door. Sometimes we lean out of our windows, and give helpful advice to passing tourists, on new techniques they might like to employ when walking, or different brands of shampoo they might find beneficial for their dry, foreign scalps. And, when we've got time, we like to help you, our loving readers. That's why this month sees yet another batch of well-crafted, well-honed tips, cheats, codes and hacks, all ready and waiting to be shoved into your hungry gamesplaying mouths. Got any more? Send 'em to me, Danny, at Mode 7, Super Play, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW, and, in the meantime, day-dream about the *Super Play* pen that might be making its way to you right now...

Spring and leap through the levels as bouncily as Simba.

THE LION KING

(Virgin)
***SP29:* 82%**

● **Level select**

YOU. Yes, you. Young person. Get your copy of *The Lion King* which you got from your slightly-mad-but-generous auntie and ram it into your SNES. Now go to the option screen of that very same game. Want a level select but can't find one? Thought so. Just press B, A, R, R, Y and you should end up with one. Now wash your hands.

SONIC BLASTMAN 2

(Taito)
***SP23:* 31%**

● **Both players the same character**

Stop all those you've-got-the-best-character arguments and give your jealous friend a hug with just one little cheat.

With controller 2, hold down the L and R buttons. You and your mate will now be able to choose the same characters and all will be well.

No more fighting over who's going to play the best character...

JUDGE DREDD

(Acclaim)
***SP34:* 82%**

● **Password**

Top man and Mode 7 regular Christopher Sargeant from the throbbing metropolis of Stevenage has been at it again, and has sent in a few passwords for his favourite game of the moment. The lad's a saint. An angel. An angel-saint. Sent here for the express purpose of making people happy. And this month, he's starting with *Judge Dredd* owners...

QBGB	Breakout at Aspen
FCWZ	Locate Rico
DXHG	RC4 Hostage Situation
YGRZ	Aboard Justice One

ACTION REPLAY

Simply *smashing* codes for, yes, *Smash Tennis*...

SMASH TENNIS

7E01 300X	Replace 'X' with 0 – 3, for player 1's game score
7E01 2E0X	Stage select
7E01 2A7F	Hi Gravity
7E01 200X	Player 'X' always serves (X=0-3)
7E01 10XX	Replace Xs with below codes

For new characters, enter the following stuff:

00 – MIKE
01 – DAN
02 – JOHN
03 – DARREN
04 – MATT
05 – MARK
06 – PETER
07 – PAUL
08 – IAN
09 – TONY
0A – BRIAN
0B – STEVE
0C – HELEN
0D – SUSAN
0E – JULIE
0F – ROSE
10 – CAROL
11 – MARINA
12 – KIRSTY
13 – NINA
14 – HELEN
15 – HELEN
16 – LOUISE
17 – JAMES
18 – JACKIE
19 – ROBERT

Thanks to the very clever and very capable sender of these top codes, whose name Alison used when booking into a cheap hotel one night last week and seems to have left there. She says "sorry".

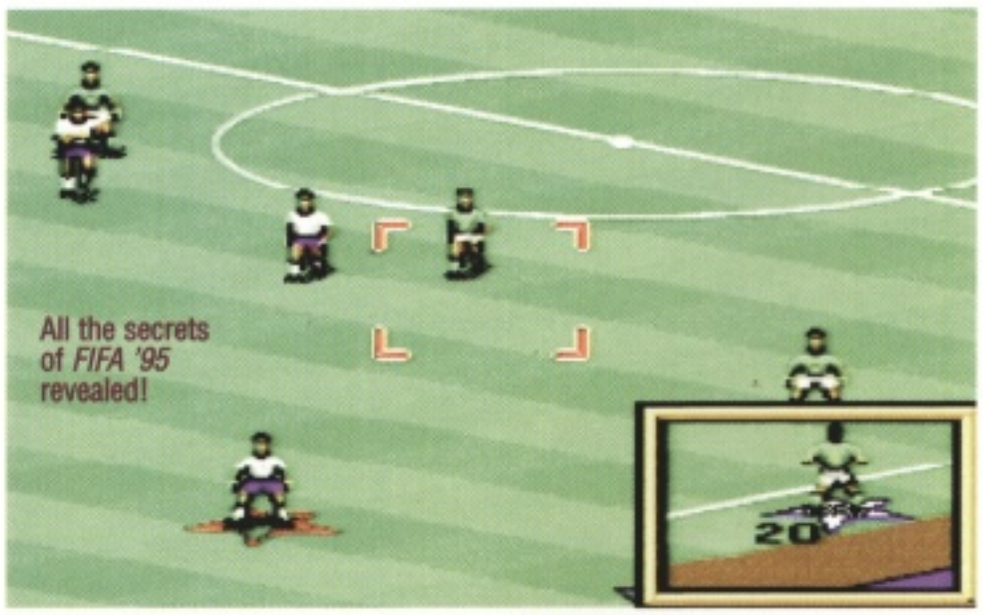
If you're the sender, and you feel a bit bothered about this, phone her up now, give her a piece of your mind, and claim your pen.

STREET RACER

(Ubisoft)
***SP25:* 91%**

● Speed it up
Rhys Weaver from Cardiff deserves the thanks of the Welsh-speaking world for finding a way of going that little bit faster in *Street Racer*. All you have to do is get to the car select screen, and before you do anything else, press X, Y, X, Y, X, Y, and then hold X and press Right until your acceleration bar is full. Then, you'll be able to live out all your boy racer fantasies until your eyes swell, and your feet expand with pride. Oh, and if you do actually feel like thanking Rhys in person, just turn up in Cardiff next month and ask for Rhys, who, according to his letter, will be "just hanging around and whistling a bit".

Add a bit of an extra challenge to *Street Racer*.



All the secrets of *FIFA '95* revealed!

FIFA SOCCER '95

(EA)
***SP:* N/A**

● All the secret modes
Let's face it. Each and every one of us, at some stage in our lives, have wanted more than anything in the world to make the Pope think that our copy of *FIFA '95* was possessed. It's a common enough thing, and nothing to be ashamed of.

I'm going to help you achieve the majority of this dream – all you've got to do is lure the Pope around to your house. Offer him a doughnut or something. Then ask him to say a prayer for Tom Heath of Milton Malsor for sending us his knowledge...

At the options screen of said game, enter the following codes, one by one:

Curve Ball	BARBYL
Invisible Walls	YYYXAAAB
Super Offence	RRRRRLR
Super Defence	LLLLLRL
Crazy Ball	XABYYBAX
Super Goalie	AAAAAYYYYY
Super Power	BABBBBBBBB
Dream Team	AABBYYXX

Then, get yourself to the 'control' menu and before you start to play press 'A'. By doing this, you'll access a special cheat screen which will show you all the new modes. Just choose what you want and play.

I recommend a game with Crazy Balls, Invisible Walls and Super Power, by the way. LISTEN TO ME!

DON'T ASK ALLAN

INVALUABLE MONTHLY GAMING ADVICE

Let Uncle Danny solve your troubles. Just put pen to paper and he will be pleased to ridicule you in a national newsstand magazine. Imagine the glory of being able to point out your name in print.

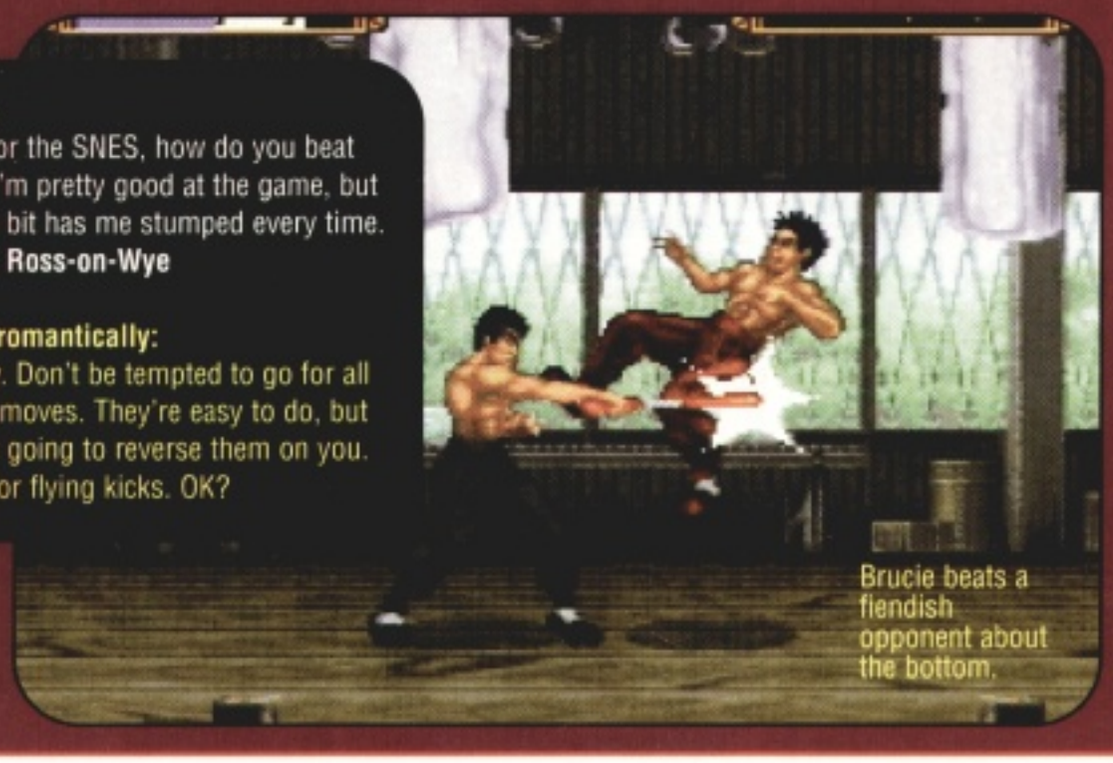
Dear Danny,
On *Judge Dredd*, how do you beat the second Gila Munja thing? Please tell me, as I'm having a great deal of trouble on this bit. Thanks.
Tim Calleja, Portsmouth

Danny says hyperactively:
Right then – that big cat-beast-thing. Keep low at the beginning, as this will make sure that it doesn't jump about. Then, you'll have to time your jump perfectly, or he'll claw you to death. Stand towards the left of him, and start punching furiously as he comes to you. Jump over him, then, as he comes back, jump over him again.

Keep doing this until he's nowt but a meaty, gristly heap of skin, blood and jelly, and you'll be fine.

Dear Danny,
On *Dragon* for the SNES, how do you beat Bruce Lee? I'm pretty good at the game, but find that this bit has me stumped every time.
Seb Hiscott, Ross-on-Wye

Danny says romantically:
S'easy, really. Don't be tempted to go for all those throw-moves. They're easy to do, but Brucie's only going to reverse them on you. Instead, go for flying kicks. OK?


Brucie beats a fiendish opponent about the bottom.

Dear Danny,
This may be the last time I write to you for advice. Please help me. I have been invited to a girl's house for tea and I am not sure what to wear.

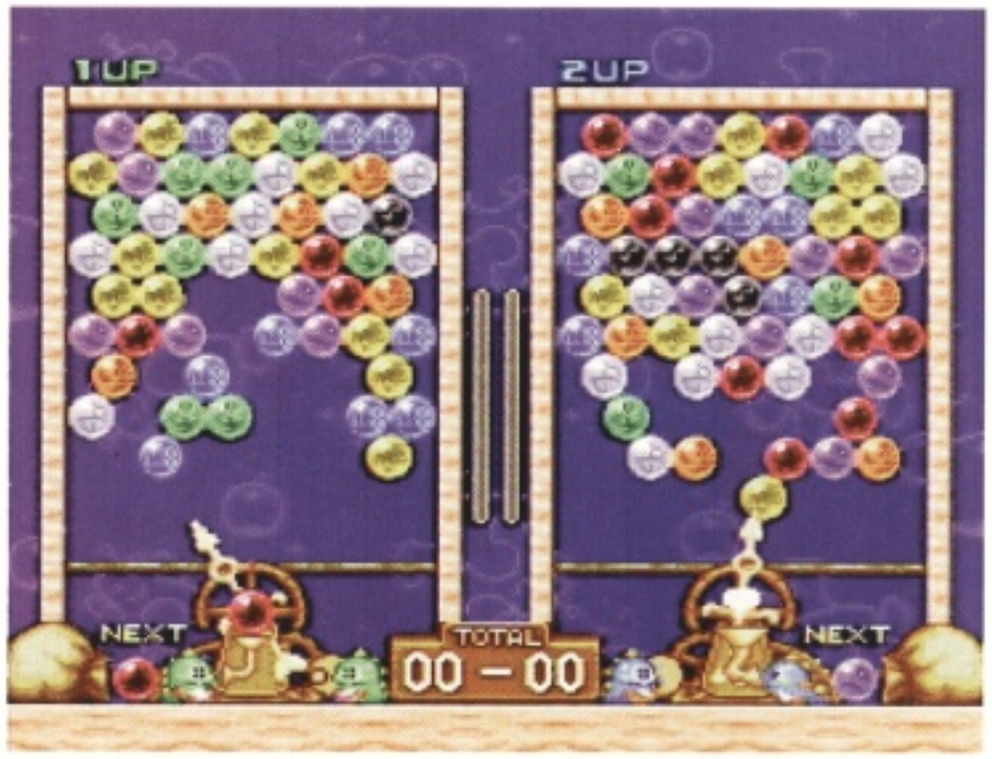
I am not a fan of jeans or sweatshirts, and am not sure what would be suitable. She is called Lucy, if it helps.
Ian Fletcher, Hull

Danny says caringly:
Casual trousers (or 'action slacks') may not be appropriate, as you say the girl's name is Lucy. I suggest skin-tight clothes would be your best option, with a pair of loose, over-size gloves.

And don't be afraid to wear your socks OVER your trousers. Show you've got character. Good luck, mate.

Dear Danny,
Goodness gracious me, do you have any cheats for *Stunt Race FX*? Oh please do tell me oh you great one, you.
Grant Brophie, Dundee

Danny says tactfully:
Oh yes. Just select speed trax and on the car selection screen press L, R, Select and Start at the same time. A new screen will magically appear allowing you to choose different cars.



Puzzle Bobble or, as some foreigners would have it, *Bust-a-Move*.

GAME GENIE

A magical monthly selection of codes...

Donkey Kong Country

Infinite Lives	C2C9 4E2C
100 Lives	1768 C33D
51 Lives	7468 C33D
Invisible Characters	23C4 3213

Uniracer

General lack of timer	3CA4 3F69

Total Carnage

Infinite Lives	C932 3414
Infinite Time Bombs	4092 3F12

Many thanks must go to Daniel and Harry Richardson of Leeds, Jenny Tailor of Croydon and Chris St. John of Thurmaston for their top Genie efforts.

DEMON'S CREST

(Konami)
***SP27:* 80%**

● **Just play against the bosses**
Should you be so great a gamesplayer that all you need to worry about in a game is taking out the boss-blokeys, (perhaps for dinner and dancing), then *Demon's Crest* may well be the ideal game for you.

To eliminate all that pre-fight nonsense, go to the password screen and, starting from the top left corner and going right, enter R B N L, X H G B, V G B B, L Y L D, and then go to the end and press Start. Now impress the girls with your manly skills.

Be a sucker for punishment and fight boss blokes all the time.

PUZZLE BOBBLE

(Taito)
***SP34:* 84%**

● **Passwords**
From the depths of our gaming knowledge, (and the back of a bit of paper we found under a desk) *Super Play* bring you a huge, pulsating mass of *Puzzle Bobble* passcodes. Now, obviously, you – as a reader – are a pretty intelligent, perceptive individual. Therefore, I'm only going to stick in the codes starting from level 75, but should you find you're having trouble geting past a certain point, write in and let me know. I won't laugh.

Round 75: DR0KZW
Round 76: HN4XGJ
Round 77: $D76TT
Round 78: ZLBF4W
Round 79: $Z?#NS
Round 80: #39!N!
Round 81: F$0WKW
Round 82: B!FB3D
Round 83: KRV4F2
Round 84: LK!M?P
Round 85: R3P#N!
Round 86: #FN$M?
Round 87: CSJZKZ
Round 88: 7W6QS5
Round 89: D6WJJV
Round 90: RZT57S
Round 91: DQVHKW
Round 92: 5XSTS7
Round 93: 3LVWXG
Round 94: ?GTQS!
Round 95: PGSMP9
Round 96: BDMRMM
Round 97: 6TBGDM
Round 98: 6P02WW
Round 99: VXRSLL
Round 100: CD6LQL

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

(Nintendo)
***SP27:* 90%**

● **Fly like the wind**
A few months ago, Mode 7 printed a cheat to allow Donkey or Diddy Kong to fly about, looking hard and impressing the girly-chimps. Well, Thomas Dicks of Amersham has found a way of getting the apes airborne without the use of new-fangled cheat things.

On Minecart Madness, get to the halfway mark and get the barrel. Then die deliberately. Now start again at the halfway mark and keep tapping Y and B simultaneously. Your character should now be able to fly around!

Our Fly Like the Wind cheat has absolutely nothing to do with that horrible single of the same name by Patrick 'hunk' Swayze.

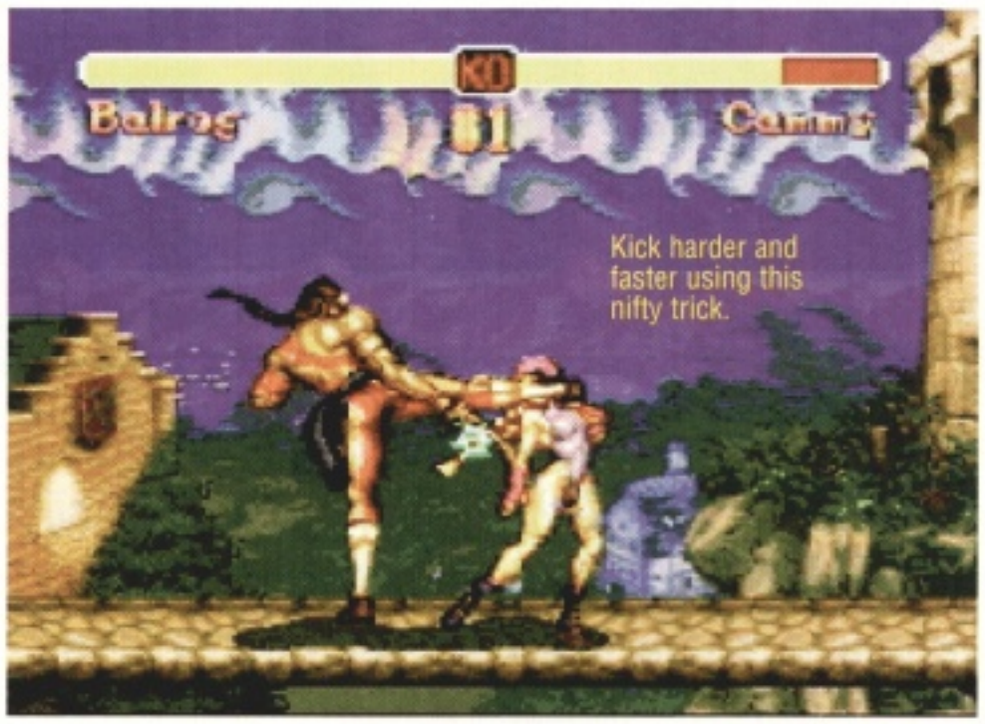
DANNY'S PLEA

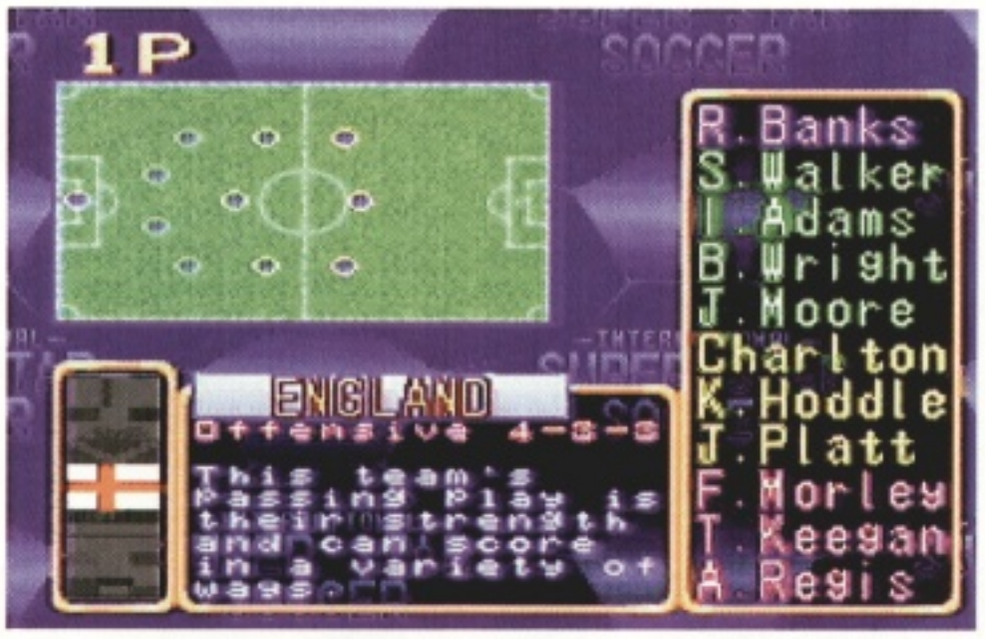
"Yoghurts are better than cream", "Young elm trees offer ample rain protection", "A change is as good as an alteration – but is it?". See how philosophical and deep I am? Send me your cart-related problems and I'll endeavour to free you from them, using special chants and a clever basin. Or something. Oh, but personal replies will not be sent, and any SAEs I get will have the stamp ripped off and used on a card to my Swiss relatives. Probably. Still interested? Write to:
Danny Dives In... (or any other amusing or rhyming name you can think of), **Super Play, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.**

SUPER STREET FIGHTER II

(Nintendo)
***SP27:* 96%**

● **Speed cheat**
A cheat that seems only to work on Jap machines, Alastair Yeung's speed cheat should make things a little more interesting if *SSF2* has become a little too easy to take seriously any more. Probably. First, go to the main options screen, highlight 'Super Battle', then quickly press down and the L button. It'll then say "Game Start" at which point you should press left or right in order to muck about with the speed settings. Fanks, Al.





Have a go against the superstar team... go on. We dare you.

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER

(Konami)
***SP30:* 92%**

● **More codes**
Thanks are due to the very polite Kevin Plant (called me 'sir', y'know), whose tireless efforts in the name of Mode 7 have produced, um, two whole passwords.

Good ones, though.

To play as Argentina on easy level against the Superstar team, enter:

$H5VV hMrhd CZVCH
ZVCHZ VCHZV CHZVC R

To play as England on normal level against the superstar team, enter:

2GCCG 2WWVg BBBBB
BBBBB BBBBB BBBBB L

YOU WHAT!

More of those almost-monthly ramblings from the intellectually challenged...

"Where is Allan Brett? This 'Danny Wallace' is obviously a fictional character, but why choose that name?"
M. Jackson, Aberdeenshire (not the popular singer/songwriter)

Allan Brett is no more. Mind exploded, y'know. Oh, and by the way, I am real, honest.

I've got a middle name and everything.

"I hope that you return back my letter at my home because I can't find you magazine in Quebec. i have only one and my father bought me when he gone to Mexico. Thank you. Please answer me because I tried at many times. You will not pay the stamp."
R. Du Pont, Quebec

Uh? I'd write back, really I would, but sadly you put a 43 cent Canadian stamp on your self-addressed envelope, and they don't tend to get accepted much round these parts.

"Please can you send me all the tips you have for the SNES, for the games that I have on it please? I have four and Gradius 3"
Alexander Dale, Southampton

Madness is just a form of expressionism.

SUPER R-TYPE

(Irem)
***SP1:* 72%**

● **Level select**
Go to the second (that's second, or 2nd) title screen (the second one, though), making sure that it's not the first one (that's first, or 1st), and press the R button nine (that's nine, or 9) times. Press UP nine (9) times, and then when you start the game press pause and then A, R and SELECT.

You now have the level select that you so wanted before you read this paragraph.

SUPER PUNCH OUT

(Nintendo)
***SP27:* 90%**

● **Change your name into Japanese**
I can't work this game out. Have the programmers made it so incredibly exciting that the cheats have had to be made exceptionally boring? Hmm? Remember the sound test cheat a few issues back? Well, now it's your chance to see your name written in two different forms of Japanese. All you've got to do is highlight New Game and press X and A simultaneously. A name registration box will appear, and you'll be able to register your name in either Katakana or Hirigana. Um... ace!

THE FINAL CURTAIN

"Do you have a tip so hot that just writing it down burns a hole in the paper?" Probably not, because that'd be scientifically impossible and a bit silly. Unless you had a really hot pen or something. And anyway, what good would it be to me getting letters that just have a huge great hole in them? None, I can tell you. I'd be very annoyed. But you get the drift. Send your tips (non-flammable only) to:

Danny, Mode 7, Super Play, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

Only tips made from natural juices will be accepted this month, and any printed will get their sender a top-class not-at-all-cheap *Super Play* pen.

LIVE '95

Never a month seems to go by when we aren't recommending you go to some show or other, but this one – Live '95 – is different! Yeah, we know we always say that too, but believe us. Would we lie to you? Just take a look at what the UK's third biggest consumer show has in store and then decide whether you want a ticket or not!

Live '95, okay? That's Tuesday 19th to Sunday 24th September, got that? What's all the fuss about, you're probably wondering by now... Well, Live '95, in case you've never heard of it before is THE consumer electronics show, which covers just about every aspect of hi-tech essentials and gadgetry you could imagine. It's the place where you'll get the chance to have a look at and try out all that's new for this year.

Interested? *Super Play* will be there as part of the Ultimate Future Games Show... Here you'll be able to try your hand at some of the latest games releases. With over 250 consoles and PCs on free play, you'll surely be able to while away many happy hours in this area of the show alone.

Many games producers in the SNES market will be there, Nintendo, Konami, EA, Sunsoft, to name but a few. You'll be able to test out *Killer Instinct*, *International Superstar Soccer Deluxe*, *Vampire's Kiss*, *FIFA '96*, *Speedy Gonzalez* and loads more. In addition to a wealth of SNES games, you'll be able to see for yourself all the latest gaming technology – the so-called next generation of gaming. So, shimmy on down to the Ultimate Future Games Show and find out why gamesplayers in the know have steam coming out of their ears! Try out the brand new Sony Playstation, as well as 3DO and CDi. We're only sorry that the Ultra 64 isn't there... But – hey – don't blame us.

If you think you're a bit of a hot-shot at games you'll be able to star in many of the games challenges taking part throughout the show during the Ultimate Future Games Show. There'll be all sorts of prizes on offer, ranging from badges to an arcade machine for your home. Try your luck, you never know what you might take home with you.

Perform some tip top combo antics with the SNES version of Nintendo's *Killer Instinct*.

Nintendo will be bringing along their big bus – the Nintendo Challenger which boasts 21 tons of playing power, with nearly 50 consoles on board where you can play all the latest games and a few of your old faves too.

'Be' a vampire hunter, at Live '95 by playing the latest in Konami's Castlevania series – *Vampire's Kiss*.

Capital FM Radio will also be pumping out the latest chart sounds all day long and doing live broadcasts. They promise to sign up all the latest names to appear during the show. You never know who you might see... Last year Capital managed to get hold of nearly half the top 10 acts at the time. So prepare to be star-struck.

Get the chance to pretend you're Limahl from out of Kajagoogoo and be a top popster of the future. All at Live '95, pop pickers.

5 IS HERE!

Carlton TV will be there too. On the Tuesday and Wednesday, your friend and ours Caron Keating will be there presenting After 5 live from the show. Once you locate them, you'll find they have all sorts of things on offer – you can even have a go at being a TV presenter or newsreader.

Down at BT's Internet Cafe you can indulge yourself in the craze that's sweeping the world – net surfing. Sample the sights, sounds and info that the world wide web has to offer without having to pay the bill! One little tip here:

http://www.futurenet.co.uk/

Point the web browser to this address and you've got a pretty amazing starting point for all things video-game related, including the *Super Play* home page which is under construction at this very moment!

And that little lot hardly scratches the surface of what's on offer at Live '95. In addition there's all the latest in home cinema and video, audio and hi-fi, music and musical instruments, camcorders and cameras, cable and satellite, TV and video, Battle of the Bands, and the Youth Rock and Pop Awards... need we go on?

If you're interested and you fancy getting a ticket, just check out the box over there for details. And we'll see you there.

LIVE '95 – THE TIME, THE PLACE

When: Tuesday 19th to Sunday 24th September
Where: London, Earls Court (One and two)
Time: Weekdays: noon till nine
Weekends: ten till six

LIVE '95 – WHERE CAN I GET A TICKET,

You can secure your ticket in advance by ringing First Call on 0171 396 4545 at any time. Or, if you live in London, you can purchase a ticket at any one of London's tube stations, or the Earl's Court Box Office. Failing that, you can always turn up on the day and get your ticket then, but you may have to queue!

Prices: Adults £8, Children (under 16) £4, with a discount for after five o'clock on weekdays (£2 reduction for adults, £1 off for kids!)

You can meet all your Eyedols at Live '95 *(OK, that's it, get out of this office... NOW! – Ed)*

SUPER MARKET

These ads are free to all *Super Play* readers. Which of course means you. So, go on, grab a pen and make some cash!

MESSAGES AND EVENTS

● For sale: Manga Videos 'The Guyver' Series Episodes 1-8. Worth £48 will sell for £24. Sorry no splits. Phone Rhod on 01784 437258 if interested.

● Yo!! To the Tay Grove Gang!! How Ya Doing? Esp. Dan, Matt, Dunc, Jess, Ruby, John, Sunny and best of all Bo!! Oh yeah, a big hello to David and Edd – from Fred Krueger.

● Mags for sale! Gamesworld issues 1-7 £2; Ultimate Future Games 1 £2; Super Action 1-2 £2. Total 24, 25, 26 £3; N-Force 1, 2, 5, 9, 12 £5; Control 4, 5 £4; Super Control 1-8 £10; Judge Dredd Megazine 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16 £10; Overkill issues 2-52 except 17 & 34 £20. All in good condition. Buyer pays postage. Tel 0868 759622.

● Manga videos for sale £6 each, NMS, CVG, Mean Machines and Super Play mags for sale £2.50 each. For more details call Eddie on 0181 813 7288.

● Hi, I'm Simple Simon and want female pen friends. I'm into computers, pop music. Please be my pen friend and write to: Simon Jones, 1 Union Street Hadley, Telford, Shropshire.

● Penpal wanted m & f, 13+, likes films SNES and Super Play. Photo if possible. All letters answered. Paul Hurst, 101 Vincent Drive, Westminster Park, Chester CH4 7RQ.

● Super Play 1-30 £50; EGM 38-71 and EGM Buyers Guide 93-95 for £50. Phone any time Monday only 0115 920 4565. Ask for Yat. Buyer collects.

● The name's Va Cong Pham, likes Manga, drawing, music (any type), watching movies with masses of action. Searches for any interests, girl penpal aged between 12-14. Write to 16 Sampson Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham B11 1JL. Simon Nooo! Don't copy me! Va Cong Pham.

● Edge Magazines numbers 12-24 £25 inc p&p. Phone 01779 812732.

● Fishing Fans Ahoy! Loads of old mags such as Rod and Line since 1970! 60p each. Offers considered. Loads of posters including Speed and True Lies. All for £15. Ask for Joe 0181 898 9679.

● Anime videos from the New Dominion Tank Police to Ushio and Tora to Oh My Goddess. I've got em all. Only £8. Phone for full list 0121 747 5408.

● Hi! My name is James. I am looking for a penpal. Preferably a girl aged 14 or over. I have a keen interest in Manga cartoons. Just write to: James, 10 Shanklin Way, North Peckham, London SE15 6JH.

● Issues 1-15 of Super Play for sale £50. Also Striker, UN Squadron, Spectre, Jurassic Park, DK Country and Equinox for swap or sale. Call Jon on 0181 883 5754.

FANZINES

● Bullet Proof FREG copy. SAE to PJG, PO Box 44, Sheffield S6 4YZ.

● Playstation Frenzy, the 1st UK unofficial PSX fanzine. Issue 1 now available. Over 50 pages of quality reviews, previews + stuff! Complete Tekken guide £2 + p&p. Phone David 0161 427 2225.

● Look! Fanzine to be set up, no name, any suggestions. Artwork wanted, comedy, Manga etc. Write to James, 3 Lionel Tce, Rhydyfelin, Pontypridd, Mid Glam CF37 5HR.

● Journeys End – RPG Fanzine for Sega and Nintendo, £1.50. Contact Ann on 0121 604 7524 or 237 Dyas Rd, Great Barr, B'ham B44 8SY.

HARDWARE FOR SALE

● SNES, 3 joypads, Multitap, USA 7 Japan Adaptor, 8 games: MarioKart, SSFII Stunt Race, Starwing, NBA Jam, Area 88, Int Superstar Soccer, Donkey Kong Country, 21 mags all boxed. Tel 01908 666228.

● UK SNES for sale. 2 Pads, 10 games including Super SFII, Samurai Showdown plus adaptor. Will sell everything boxed with manuals in excellent condition for £250. Tel 0181 578 9117.

● SNES UK 2 pads, 9 games £150. Game Gear 18 games £150. Game Boy 3 games £25. Tel Basildon 286812.

● UK SNES for sale with 9 classic games (all over 80%) 3 pads, mouse, Multitap, convertor. All boxed, mint condition, worth £310 – bargain at £190 ono. Ask for Jon 0161 483 4492.

● UK SNES VGC 3 pads, Multitap, Action Replay II, SFII Turbo, Donkey Kong, John Maddens Jimmy Connors and F1 Aguri Suzuki Racing £190 or will swap for an Amiga 1200 or 600HD. Must collect. Tel 0131 556 1788.

● UK SNES for sale:
3 joypads, 1 joystick, 17 top games, including Donkey Kong Country, Stunt Race FX, SFII Turbo, Bomber Man + Multitap. Worth over £1000, yours for £390. Tel Will 01793 750392.

● SNES for sale, boxed with instructions. Includes 2 joypads, dust cover, stereo a/n cable, SNES to Hi-Fi cable, tribal tap 6 player adaptor, Street Fighter II, Secret of Mana, Donkey Kong Country plus limited edition Street Fighter II and Kinkey Kong CDs. Ring Andrew on 01457 867928.

● US SNES with 2 controllers & 4 games (inc SFII & Starfox). All boxed with necessary leads. Must sell £80. Tel 01368 863422 after 6pm.

● Mega CD 1 Mega Drive 1 + games pack + Night Trap, Rebel Assault, Thunder Hawk + Carts Desert Strike Trilogy 3, Ghostbuster 9. All UK for £160. Tel 0191 388 7685 (Dave).

● A500: Includes 1.5 meg, music and word processing programs, wide variety of classic games + 9 pin colour printer. Tel Monir 0181 871 2396.

● UK SNES, 3 controllers, dust cover, Multitap, 24 top games, converter, Super Play 1-32. £500 ono. Call Dale on 01243 377994.

● SNES 2 pads, 7 top games, all issues of Super Play and other mags, Akira video and 6 carry cases only £200 ono. Phone 01204 843814.

● UK SNES with 21 games including DKC, Mana, ISS etc, comes with adaptors, Multitap, 2 joypads, 50+ mags. Worth £1000, need money so only £200, excellent condition, boxed. Phone 0191 284 8482. Must collect.

● UK SNES with 13 games including SSF2, ISS, Street Racer, Zelda, Metroid. + 2 control pads + convertor. All boxed £180-220. Tel 01892 533690 5-10pm.

● Game Gear, mains adaptor, car adaptor, magnifier, TV tuner, 2 games, good condition. Sell for £100 ono 01222 497699.

● US Super Nintendo, 2 joypads, Streetfighter II Turbo, Mario World. Boxed excellent condition £100 ono Tel 01628 71860.

● SNES (UK), 2 joypads, all leads, SFII, Super Mario Kart, Starwing, Pilotwings, Super Probotector, Dragons Lair, Champions World Class Soccer. Total Price £170. Tel 01422 356496.

● UK SNES for sale with 2 controllers. 9 top games incl Stunt Race, SFII, Super Star Wars, plus issues 1-30 of Super Play. All boxed and in mint condition £250. Tel 01799 540106.

● SNES for sale. 17 of the very best games with two joypads, convertor and loads of mags. All for £350 ono. Call Ben 01707 330501.

● UK SNES for sale; 4 pads (program) carry case, 16 games inc US: SSFII, UK: ARII, M Kart, Flashback, Zelda, JP, Top Gear, Sim City, Allstars, Equinox + more. £200 ono. Tel 0181 864 1931. Good condition.

● Read this! UK SNES with DK Country, ARII + more £175 (worth double that) or will swap for unexpanded Amiga 1200 with no games, just Workbench etc. Peterborough area only. Tel: 01733 576349.

● UK SNES for sale £280. 10 games and game genie. Games include SOM, Syndicate, Starwing, MKII, Sim City. Phone Lee on 01843 227702 (after 6.30pm).

● UK SNES + 2 controllers + Street Fighter II Turbo. £100 ono. Tel 01628 71860.

● UK SNES (boxed) 9 x 90+ games (mainly boxed) with instructions. 2 pads, various leads, pile of mags. Ideal starter pack £200 ono. Tel 0151 424 9766.

● ZX Spectrum 125K disc and taps. 100s of games, 3 joysticks, light gun. Perfect condition £50 ono. Tel 01902 603142.

● SNES joystick £10; Turbo joypad £5; Mario Paint (with mouse) (UK) £25; Cannon Fodder (UK) £30. All perfect condition. Lot for £60 ono. Tel 01902 603142.

● UK SNES + FF3 (US), SOM, TMNT Tournament, Mario, Bomberman, US/JAP adaptor, Slightly duff Multitap, 3 controllers. £150 ono. Tel Neil 01225 852267.

● 50/60hz UK Super NES, 3 top games, 2 pads, case, full screen & speed, scart lead, power supply. All boxed as new £110. Tel 01664 434104.

● SNES UK, 27 games incl Int Superstar Soccer, Super Punchout, Cannon Fodder, NBA Jam TE, Earthworm Jim, Fifa, Mario Kart, Alien 3, WWF Raw, 2 joypads. VGC £350 ono. Tel 01224 482376.

● Normal NES with 6 games: Rigar, Top Gun, Paper Boy, Duckhunt, Bayou Billy, Gironile. It comes with 2 normal controllers, 1 super controller and light gun. If interested ring 01799 586453.

● SNES (UK) 16 top games boxed & instructions, 2 joypads, loads of mags & guides. V good condition

EE
DS

Soccer. Total Price
01422 356496.

ES for sale with 2
s. 9 top games incl
e, SFII, Super Star
s issues 1-30 of
Play. All boxed and in
condition £250. Tel
99 540106.

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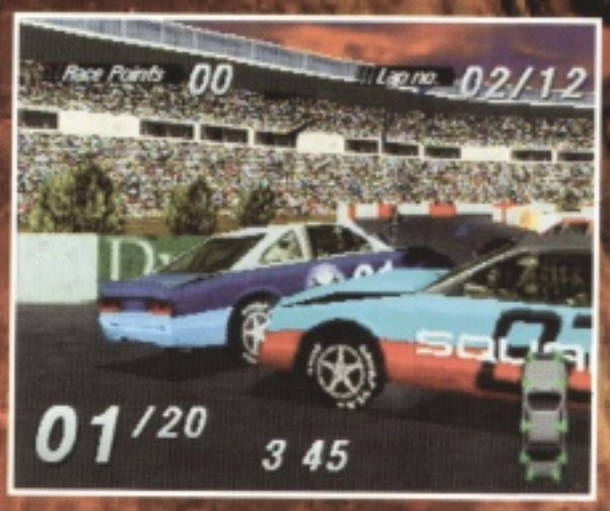

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● Swap: Stunt Race FX Joe & Mac, Bubsy, Cool Spot, Super Bomber Man, Star Wars or Buster Busts Loose for the Sporting New Baseball. Tel Belfast 814576.

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● Got Anime music? Ranma? Dominion? No Akira!! I'll swap Pop 'n' Twinbee (UK) for both, SP 10-14, Sonic Comic 1-25. Wellingborough area. Ask for Chris 01933 674082.

● Dragon Ball Z titles, DBZ1, DBZ2, DBZ3, DBZ (rpg), Super SFII for Sonic 3 or Ecco for Mega Drive. Tel 01986 896567.

● UK Super NES + cash for American Super NES + SCART lead. Phone Colin on 0131 447 7239.

● Swap my excellent Stunt Race FX (UK) for your Secret of Mana (UK) or sell for £23. Ask for Robert on Chichester (01243) 375888.

● US Manga Corps trading cards to swap for any other type of trading cards. Tel 01635 46356.

● Jap games: Final Fight, Super Ghouls & Ghosts, Populous, Prince of Persia. Swap for Game Boy games. Tel Dave on 01946 62900.

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● I will swap any one of these games + Double Dragon V's The Shadow Falls for free, for Final Fantasy III, Super Streetfighter II, Pocky and Rocky, Megaman X, Mortal Kombat II, Contra 3 and Super Punchout. Tel 0121 602 8279.

● I'll swap my Wildtrax, Spike McFang all (Jap) for your FFIII or DKC (US). Tel and ask for Quang after 4pm only 0171 537 9933.

● Gods, Star Wars + Final Fight (US) plus adaptor, Krusty's (UK) for Pebble Beach, Lemmings 2, Cool Spot, Madden '95, or NHL Hockey '94. Tel 01253 27530.

● I have Fifa Soccer, World Cup USA 94, Secret of Mana and I want SSFII, ISS, Side Pocket. Tel 01543 871734 after 5.30pm expt Sat or Sun.

● Swap my Wolverine Admantium Rage or Soccer Kid + £8 for Final Fantasy III. Call Sharjeel on 0141 339 4873.

● I'll swap my Super Metroid for Stunt Race FX/Cannon Fodder/Street Racer or Theme Park. Phone Jack 01223 361108.

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● SF2 £10; Rock 'n' Roll Racing (US) £10; Super Star Wars £10; Fifa Soccer £10 or will swap for Int. Sup. Soccer.

● 8 SNES games for sale including Unirally, Donkey Kong, Street Racer, Earthworms. All good games, price £15-25. £150 ono for all. Ring Ben 0181 555 5164.

● SNES games – UK Addams Family 2 £10; US SOM £20; Bomberman + Tap £25; Zelda £10. Offers accepted. Buy 2 + games, receive 5 US magazines free! Games in good condition. Surrey area. Tel Ben 0181 656 4366.

● Earthbound (US) £30; Breath of Fire (US) £25; Desert Fighter (UK) £12. (p&p inc). Tel 01379 74036.

● Issues 1-24 of Super Play except issue 11 are for sale £1.50 each or £40 for the lot. Also Super Play Gold for sale for £2. Ring Andrew on 01457 867928.

● UK SNES with Starwing, Another World, Desert Strike, Marioland, F-Zero, Jurassic Park. All with instructions. If interested, ring 01799 586453.

● US games, DKC, Mana, Gaia, Zelda, Shadowrun, Prince of Persia, Contra 3, Castlevania 4, Starfox, Pro Action Replay 2 + joypad. All mint condition boxed and instructions. Offers. Tel James 0151 264 0134.

● SNES games: NHLPA Hockey 93, Tiny Toons, Ryan Giggs, Spiderman & The X-Men, Actraiser, Robocop 3, Lethal Weapon, R-Type. £15 each or nearest offer. Tel 01740 655842 / 01740 651254.

● Eleven classic SNES games for sale including Unirally, EWJ, Street Racer and more. Will sell individually or all eleven for £200. Tel David 01250 873755.

● 5 UK SNES games for sale, all boxed with manual in mint condition. Prices start £5 to £15. Swaps considered. Tel Neil 01506 80923. Must live in Lothian.

● I am selling Cannon Fodder for the SNES. Mint condition. Sell for £20, worth £35. Deliver within reason. Tel 01623 643009.

● Mario All Stars £25; Street Racer, Flashback, Mystical Ninja, Probotector, Ghouls 'n' Ghosts £20; Starwing, MK, Marioworld £15. All in perfect condition. Ask for Richard 01328 820716.

● Ogre Battle US cart for sale £45. No offers or swaps. Ring Tuesday only please 12pm or 5pm and ask for Simon 01363 773023.

● For sale Fifa Soccer £25; Zombies £25; Zelda £20; NCAA £20. All UK with instructions in excellent condition. Many more titles for sale. Call after 5pm 01228 28363.

● SNES games for sale. Stunt Race FX £30 (US); Gradius III £15 (Jap); SSFII £35; Secret of Mana £30 (US); Joypad £8. Super Game Boy with Games £50. Tel 01978 359264.

● For sale/swap Earthworm Jim for £25 or swap for a game (90%). Tel Neil 01506 880923. Must live in West Lothian area.

● Lots of Game Boy games for sale just £5 each. Ask for Edward 01734 832955.

● NES to SNES Tri Star adaptor £15. SNES game SF2 turbo £15. Also Arcade Power + SF2 Alpha 8 + 2 controls £170. Tel Spen 01902 662040.

● S. Punchout, Secret of Mana (US) £30; Megaman X (US) £25; Desert Strike (US) £15; SMW (UK) £15; Flashback (UK) £20; Super Metroid (UK) £25. All excellent condition. Lot for £140. Tel Russell 01902 603142.

● Will sell Star Wing £15; Zelda III £15; SFII Turbo £20; Mario World £10; Troddlers £15; Equinox £20; plus some more. Please phone (027) 74079 in Ireland.

● Super Play Magazines for sale. Mint condition, filed in Super Play Black Binder. Numbers 1-18. Open to offers. Tel 01782 838455.

● I'll sell GB games: Wario, Donkey Kong, All Star Challenge 2 for £30 or £12 each / or swap all of them for SNES games Batman and Robin or Mystical Ninja. Tel 01902 671432.

● Final Fantasy 3 for sale. £40 mint condition. Might consider swapping for two good UK SNES games. Tel 01225 339244.

● SNES games for sale. Bomberman 2 (UK) £25; Tiny Toons (UK) £15; Return of the Jedi (UK) £25; Kick Off (UK) £5; Robocop (US) £10. All boxed + with instructions. Tel 0181 340 8867 and ask for Alex.

WANTED

● Doctor, Doctor SFC Penpal Wanted. Write to Wai, 32 Blackbull Rd, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5QN.

● Wanted Pal Booster for Jap Famicom, cash waiting, also top SNES games wanted. 01463 221173.

● Wanted Orchestral Square/Enix Music CDs. Will pay handsomely or swap for Japanese game or Anime merchandise. Phone Adrian on 01234 825381.

● I want Super Metroid or Zelda III. Will swap Cybernator and/or SFII Turbo. Phone Tushar 0181 654 4018.

● Wanted: May 1994 and June 1994 issues of Gamesmaster Magazine or Tips Book for SNES Secret of Mana. I will pay postage. Please contact asap Tom Brooks, 35 Priestsic Road, Sutton in Ashfield, Notts NG17 2AH.

● I need Super Street Fighter II. Brill games to swap or will pay very good price if good condition but not essential. Tel 01443 406575.

● Hi! Has anyone got Secret of Mana for sale? If so, phone CJ 0141 649 1038. (Living in Glasgow if poss). Box and instructions please.

● Wanted – Final Fantasy 3 (US). Will give cash or swap for my games including: EWJ, S/Mana and many more. Tel 01524 770851.

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'SILLY WAITING GAMES'

Yoshi's Island! What a scoop! At last a proper sequel to *Super Mario World*! Unfortunately, when I rang the Nintendo Hotline they said *YI* has a UK release of 'some time in '96'. Do Nintendo want us to go out and buy Saturns today?

So the Big N are concentrating on *Diddy Kong's Quest* and *Killer Instinct*. So what? Flashy ACM graphics are nice and *DKC* is a good game, but it doesn't come near the variety, challenge, size and unmatched sheer joy of *Super Mario World*.

What's the point of making 16-bit games look like 32-bit games when they play like 8-bit games?

I've stuck with Nintendo over the years simply because they make the best games. But my patience is running out.

The idea of playing *Sonics* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, etc. is becoming more and more attractive the longer Nintendo play their silly waiting games. Surely they must realise that the UK will be swamped with import versions of *Yoshi's Island* and they'll ultimately lose money by holding back on the UK release. Likewise the new *Zelda* and *Metroid* games.

Richard Kirman, Brighton

Where Nintendo and Sega are concerned it's always going to be a case of you pays yer money, you takes yer choice.

If it's *Sonic* after *Sonic* after *Sonic* you want, you know where to go. If it's the finest games ever, but at a rather more relaxed rate of delivery, the answer's simple too.

We abhor the UK release situation, of course, and sympathise with you totally. The gulf between Nintendo's presence in Japan and the UK is still as wide as it's always been – while NCL have been building *Yoshi's Island* hype to deservedly massive levels, we're still waiting for NUK to give it a release date over here.

But with the recent streamlining at Nintendo (see our news story this issue) it's clear that Howard Lincoln takes the market over here very seriously, and it augurs well for UK games.

'PRETTY GOLD BADGE'

I have just read your August issue and I felt I had to write in.

Your review of *Time Cop* was a little unfair on the company who programmed it. Surely if you could sell sand to the Arabs you would do.

I was under the impression that the Nintendo Seal Of Approval was not just a pretty gold badge on the box, but an assurance that one of the best games producers in the world had viewed the game and deemed it fit to go into production. After all, without Nintendo manufacturing the game, crap like *Timecop* would never see the light of day.

So you see, it is Nintendo that see the profit in a film license and Nintendo are ultimately to blame.

Steve Hargreaves, Fallowfield, Manchester

The line that says the seal of approval is 'your assurance that Nintendo has approved the quality of this product,' only refers to a cart's ability to actually work on your machine, not its actual entertainment value. If Nintendo actually had a quality committee whose sole purpose was to judge a game's worth and therefore 'releasability', there simply wouldn't be enough games to fill retailers' shelves.

So you see, it is not Nintendo that see profit in a film license and not Nintendo who are ultimately to blame. That really is a very silly claim indeed.

'MIP-MAP INTERPOLATION'

Regarding your *Doom* feature in issue 34, exactly what do you mean by (deep breath): 'to generate textured polygons using tri-linear mip-map interpolation'? We're not all technical freaks...

Chris Dance, Whitton, Middlesex

If you're not a technical freak, why are you interested in it?

Okay, it's a process whereby, instead of using the same data when expanding a graphical image (giving it a blocky appearance when enlarged dramatically – you can see one of the best examples of this is in the *Afterburner* coin-op), it actually calculates new data as it goes to give a smoother look. This is one major reason why, in a 3D title – the core variety of game on next generation consoles – the NU64 will outperform both the PlayStation and Saturn so dramatically.

Wait till you see what this baby can do...

'SEX ON THE SNES'

Now that all Super Nintendo games have an age certificate to allow games like *Mortal Kombat II* to feature blood, etc. – which I think is pretty good – why don't software manufacturers use the system to have some sex in their games? I mean, sex is natural, everybody does it. I bet you guys have done it at least once in your lives. I don't care really. I already have stuff like *Voyeur* and *The Good Sex Guide* on my PC CD-ROM but I'm just curious as to why there is no sex on the SNES if there is an age rating system.

Mike Crotch (apparently)

The age rating system was introduced to control the distribution of games containing adult themes, not to provide a springboard from which to launch games featuring bonking and suchlike.

Nintendo's attitude still remains primarily family-friendly – the rating system merely allows them to have full versions of goremungous games on their own system: it's a money making thing, not an ethical one in the long run.

You're better off sticking to your PC and 'games' like *Virtual Valerie*.

'DELIA SMITH'S'

I was watching Delia Smith's Cooking Programme on BBC2, 28/6/95, and I noticed that the background music to one of her recipes was from *Secret Of Mana*. I thought it was nice that our great game has been noticed in high places.

Anyway, sorry to moan, but I have just purchased *Illusion Of Time* and, like Mana, it's a great

KINDLY LEAVE THE STAGE

Q What do you call a chicken in a shellsuit?
A An egg.
L. Jenkin, Penzance, Cornwall
4/10
We liked this one.

Q How do you start a pudding race?
A Say 'go'.
Peter Brodie, Sydney, Australia
2/10

Q What've a grape and a chicken got in common?
A They're both purple, except for the chicken.
John Booth, Leeds, West Yorks.
1/10

Q Where can you find out how heavy a whale is?
A At a whale-weigh station.
R. Nurse, Shipley, West Yorks.
-10/10
Pitiful.

Get 5/10 or above for your joke and you win yourself something spesh. Kindly Leave The Stage, Super Play, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

'TAKE A HAIRPIN'

Here's my impression of the NU64's joypad. I invented it after reading Howie Lincoln's comments on the 'cat's meow', and how it would be designed to cope with today's 3D gaming environments.

It more than slightly resembles the VB's joypad (which is also designed for 3D games), but it has one crucial difference. The central sphere allows both sides of the joypad to rotate independently up and down (like Namco's Negcon), but also towards and away from each other. This freedom of movement, together with the twin D-pads, A, B, X, Y buttons and the L, R, select and start triggers underneath the pad allow for the ultimate 3D gaming experience. Imagine squeezing the two handle bars together to rise another thousand feet in *Pilot Wings 2*. Or jamming the left handle bar down to take a hairpin while unloading homing missiles with two of the triggers in the sequel to *F-Zero*.

Design-wise, the central sphere also matches and explains the NU64's circular joypad ports, and carries the futuristic logo perfectly. When it comes to beat-'em-ups, developers could take time to utilise these new features, but realistically will probably use the usual D-pad and button combinations. Anyway, roll on Shoshinkai...

Andrew Alty, Warrington, Cheshire

Yes, we like it. A bit *too* Virtual Boy-inspired perhaps, but enough to earn you an Action Replay 2 as a prize.

Andrew Alty's impression of the future of joypads. Could this be the way forward?

'THE LETHAL DOSAGE'

'Info from the NU64 is transmitted to the pad which in turn transmits the info to the electric chair. For example, if when playing *Killer Instinct* the player concedes a hit, a ten volt shock is administered. However, if the player loses the game he/she receives the lethal dosage of 100,000 volts!'

Taron Wyatt, Bolton, Lancashire

And this isn't entirely without merit, either. (Well, it made us smile a bit.) Not exactly conducive to replay value in your games, though, is it?

THE SUPER PLAY INTERESTING-O-METER

Platform games – reborn?

2D beat-'em-ups – dead?

HOT

NOT

Anti-Nintendo rants

Pro-Sega or Sony wibblings

game, but why have Nintendo left out the helpful booklet which the Americans had supplied with their copies. (I love RPGs but, alas, I am not so hot at them.)

Colin Mills, Silchester, Reading

Cripes. What next, one of *Front Mission*'s more subtle pieces backing *Richard and Judy*? The mind boggles.

Have any other readers noticed any other game music/real-life music similarities? There's a cutting-edge-of-fashion *Super Play* T-shirt (i.e. the only size left, medium, the wearing of which will make you look either a) like something out of a popular 'indie' 'band', or b) plain daft and the source of much hurtful ridicule) for the most convincing example.

We can't understand your problem with IOT. Ours, which was sent to us directly from Nintendo, contains the same info as the US original.

'YOU FORGOT THE SUPER'

I bet you think you are smart. Well, I've got news for you! On the Super Quiz in issue 34 of your fabbo magazine you asked us to name every game that adorable dinosaur Yoshi had starred in, and on the answers page you forgot the Super Scope and *Yoshi's Safari*.

I just thought I would correct you on your mistake. Bye!

David Edwards, Stockwell, London

Nah, we don't think we're smart, only human. *You* think *you're* smart, though, don't you? For example, you know that Yoshi is a product of fantasy and not a dinosaur at all. Oh, you don't? Then please go away.

'BOUND TO FAIL'

It's good to see classic games such as *Doom* being converted to the SNES, but I can't help feeling that I'll be disappointed with the end product. Although I'm sure the SNES will have a good shot at it, due to memory and speed restrictions it is bound to fail.

Owning a PC, as I do, I have played many different types of games which have not been seen on the SNES – *Magic Carpet*, *Full Throttle* and *Ultimate Soccer Manager*, to name but a few, and, although *Magic Carpet* could prove a problem to convert, surely the other two could make it with a few alterations.

I think it's time for programmers to leave the film-licensed platformers alone and look for inspiration from PC programmers – Bullfrog especially.

James Nicolson, Falmouth, Cornwall

Well, you can see how well Sculptured pulled off the conversion of *Doom* in this very issue – we were certainly pleasantly surprised.

PC games are a super source for new games on the SNES, and things like *Full Throttle* could indeed be produced for it – given enough memory: If the Super CD-ROM system were actually available by now, conversions of such titles would be easy. But with cartridge memory restrictions it's not going to happen.

We can't see that many more platform games based on films coming out – even though the game was perfectly acceptable, sales of *Judge Dredd* are reportedly disappointing.

Of course, when looking at the PC and SNES you've got to bear in mind how different their target audiences are on the whole. Given the choice of *Killer Instinct* or *Ultimate Soccer Manager*, the average SNES-owning punter would go for Rare's offering.

Now, here are two readers with a common grumble in mind...

'METAPHORICAL HMV HORIZON'

If games are supposed to be mass media and played by millions over the world, how come they can't be available everywhere at the same time? Can you imagine if *Pulp Fiction* was only sold in China, and released in the UK a year later? That's what this whole stupid situation feels like. I appreciate that cost, marketing and appeal are all factors to a company licensing Japanese games for the UK, but Sega have been doing it for years. Now it's the summer, the Game Shortage takes effect,

HIGHLIGHTS

'Should I buy a new convertor and try again?'

Ric Somers, Keighley, West Yorks.

Yes. Converters are our friends.

'I own a fish and chip shop in Brentford, Middlesex and sell second-hand carts.'

A. Christides, Brentford, Middlesex

We're not even going to try to understand.

'Please write that I love Sarah Lord lots and lots!'

Simon Calder, aged 11

What are we – Smash Hits or something? Gah.

'Really your trial worth 9999 congratulations.'

Andreou N. Panagiotis, Nafplio, Greece

Er, thanks. We think.

'Well, I've just had to buy a PlayStation, but I'll be getting an Ultra 64 too.'

Larry Loxbury, Somerset

Shame on you, Larry. At least it wasn't a Saturn, though.

with all the publishers flying away until Christmas when they want to start flogging games again. With the next generation looming on the metaphorical HMV horizon, Nintendo have to provide something to feed us with between now and *Killer Instinct*.

I'd like to reiterate Nintendo's *SFII Turbo* phrase, the one they said when they released the game before Sega: 'You've got to be fast to last'.

Richard Melville, Exeter

'RUDDY GREAT BIG'

Nintendo seem to be ignorant to the English gamer's needs. I mean, we don't all love baseball and American football but there are not a whole lot of differences between us and the Yanks. Why then is it that we wait so long for carts to appear? (If they appear at all.) Will Nintendo continue this annoying habit on the Ultra 64?

I like my games to be played on compatible machines without ruddy great big adaptors sticking out like Mustang engines.

Colin Doran,
Aldershot, Hants.

We probably get more letters knocking Nintendo's release priorities than we do any other topic. It's an old theme, but it ranks as perhaps the most important to potential NU64 owners. It's simple really: if Sega can do it, Nintendo followers are going to feel let down to the point of losing faith.

Nintendo have deliberately pushed the emphasis away from the Ultra 64 in the UK to ensure the SNES maximum coverage so until we get closer to April and the machine's UK release, no-one can yet vouch for releases over here slipping behind the US and Japan.

But, as we've said already, there's a brighter feeling emanating from Nintendo of late, and we're optimistic about the situation with the NU64.

WRITE NOW!

SNES worries on your mind? Studies show that writing it down can help. So, get out a pen and paper and seal your thoughts in an envelope to...

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ENVELOPE ART

The section of Playback where we challenge you to put more than your biro to work. Paints, crayons, felt-pens, we don't care. Just draw!

Stephen Tsang from Leamington Spa takes a retrospective look at those clothes we wore in the 80s.

WINNER

M. Hiskado again! You know who you are, and so does everyone else by now. This time Macross II provides his inspiration.

Super-psychedelic anime from the boy with the odd name – Tyrone Theophile from London.

J. Mason of Penzance is the reader to thank for this rather beautiful drawing of Flammie from *Secret of Mana 2*. See how nicely drawn the planet in the background is!

Erwin Delgado from London chooses Jago as his artist's model.

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FINAL FANTASY FORUM

This month we teach Super Play readers how to lie, cheat and steal without getting caught. An honorary degree from the University of Zozo awaits you...

The letters just keep coming! This month's Forum is indebted to H. Rochester of Kent, Mark Hisakado, Journey's End, Rolecall, Neil Costigan, 'the RabiteMan', Tatsushi Nakao, and an anonymous benefactor. Special thanks go to Mohammed Hanif Dadabhai for parting with his *FFIII* cartridge for this column's screen shots. Next month, the Fanatic's Tower and the Cult of Kefka. But for now...

Make sure you fight the Sentries (4pts) in the break. They tend to hog the After Eights, otherwise.

DO LUNCH WITH GESTAHL

Can the war really be over? When the Espers fly from the Sealed Gate and devastate the Empire's capital, it seems peace might be at hand. Emperor Gestahl offers to make amends, and upon entering Vector you are invited to dine with him to discuss the future.

You may not be aware of it, but Gestahl is actually judging you on the answers you give. Your responses determine the outcome of the meeting in a minor way, and if you follow the correct procedure (and hold your tongue, in some instances) you can acquire invaluable items.

Make sure all party members are on full health and magic points and have at least one pair of Sprint Shoes equipped before entering Gestahl's Fortress. It's only wise to take representatives of the states at war: if you place Cyan in your party then General Leo will personally apologise for the poisoning of Doma's people.

A complex points system governs the appraisal of your behaviour during the meal, but never fear because – yes! – the *Super Play* Banqueting Table Manners Table shows you how to achieve the result you most favour *[these names get worse every month – Ed]*.

Once the meal is over, leave the banqueting hall and head down the stairs to where a sentry will tell you how

Don't talk to Kefka – his little monologue wastes valuable time.

Mog forages for crumbs (below). Moogles aren't invited to dinner parties.

LUNCHEON VOUCHERS

Each guard talked to	**1pt** (24 pts possible)
Each guard fought	**4pts** (20 pts possible)
Who shall we toast?	
To the Empire	**2 pts**
To the Returners	**1 pt**
To our hometowns	**5 pts**
What should we do with Kefka?	
Leave him in jail	**5 pts**
Pardon him	**1 pt**
Execute him	**3pts**
What about Doma?	
What's done is done	**1 pt**
That was inexcusable	**5 pts**
Apologize again!!	**3 pts**
With regard to General Celes...	
Was she an Imperial spy?	**1 pt**
Celes is one of us!	**5 pts**?
We trust Celes!	**3 pts**
Any more questions?	
2 pts per question asked, **-10 pts** for asking any question twice	
About the Espers	
They've gone too far	**5 pts**
You unleashed them	**2 pts**
Which question did you ask first?	**5 pts**
Would you like to take a break?	**5 pts**
Is there anything you wish to hear me say?	
That all you want is peace	**3 pts**
That your war's truly over	**5 pts**
That you're sorry	**1 pt**
I need to ask a favour	
Reply 'yes' first time	**3 pts**

you performed. Depending on your success, the following cumulative rewards await you.

- 0-49 pts **Imperial troops withdraw from South Figaro**
- 50-66 pts **Imperial troops withdraw from Doma**
- 67-76 pts **The Imperial Base's treasure room is unlocked**
- 77-89 pts **Receive the Tintinabar from Gestahl**
- 90-93 pts **Receive the Charm Bangle for impeccable behaviour**

The Tintinabar relic recovers hit points with every step (ideal for Rage-hunters on the Veldt) whilst the Charm Bangle reduces the frequency of random monster attacks – most useful when exploring dungeons, especially as the Moogle Charm only appears in the World of Ruin.

The Imperial Base's treasure room, frustratingly locked until now, holds many chests as well as two hidden items.

Be sure to check the stove for a Flame Sabre and the bottom wall of the room for a concealed chest.

With Doma evacuated, you're free to loot its treasures before the floating continent appears. Make sure you check the store room on the castle walls for the Beads Relic.

"Er, sorry about all the people I brutally killed."

Now's the time to scour Vector for treasures.

SHADOW'S DREAMS

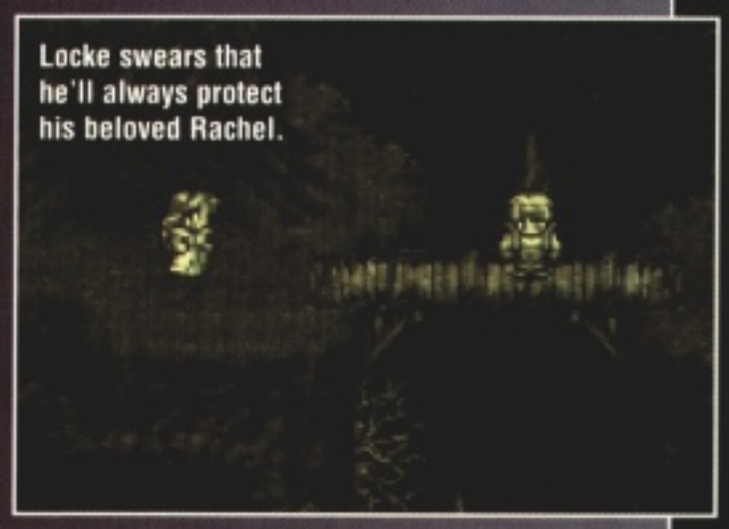
As we hinted before, Shadow is indeed related to Relm in the fatherly manner. There are supposedly seven dreams – we've seen five – from which, with a little intelligence, Shadow's past can be pieced together. Although it's slightly random, there is a pattern to their occurrence. Take every opportunity to rest him for a night at the Inns of Thamasa, Doma Castle and the Colosseum for the most likely occurrences.

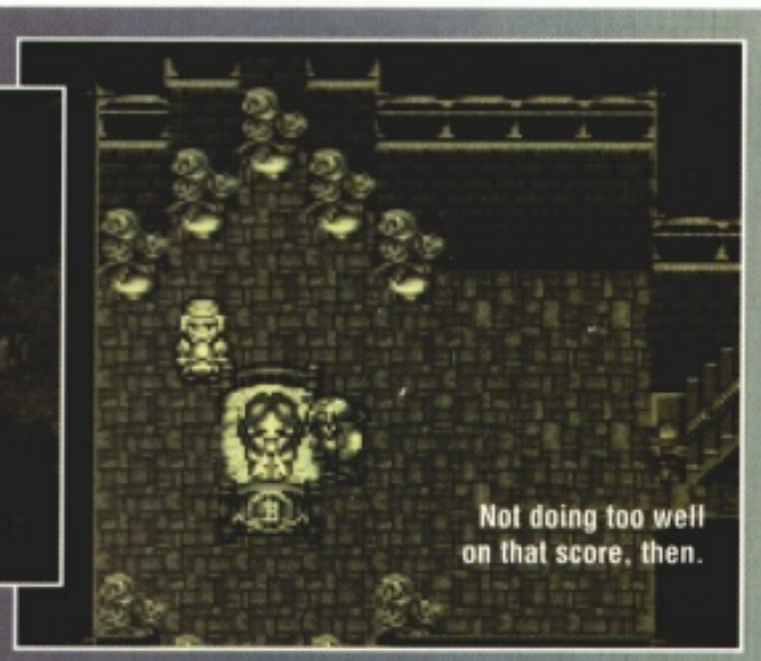
A character called Baram (or Billy, if you play the original Japanese *FFVI*) calls out to 'Clyde' in his sleep. It's later revealed that they are partners in crime, and as they make off with a million gold pieces Baram comes up with the name 'Shadow'. In a slightly disturbing scene (you'll have to see it yourself!) the partnership is dissolved and an exhausted fugitive Clyde is taken in by a kindly young woman with a rather familiar dog.

However, he leaves before his indiscretion is discovered and it seems that Relm and Shadow will forever remain unaware of their relation. But we're still lacking solid information on Relm's dream, so can anybody out there help Amanda Attia or Mark Hisakado with a recommended sleeping spot for her?

PROFILES

LOCKE

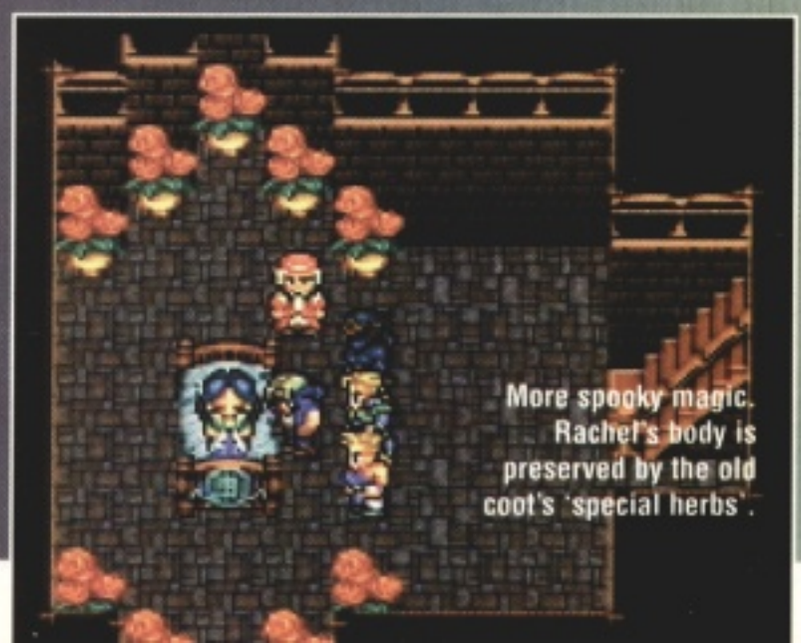




Adventurer, treasure hunter, a master of euphemistic career titles... Judging from your letters, Locke is possibly the most popular character of *FFIII*. He's also a key figure in the unfolding stories of the people around him. To learn more about why Locke is so keen to protect Terra and Celes, make sure he's in your party when you go to the village of Kohlingen. You'll see two revealing flashbacks to the tragedy that befell his fiancée Rachel.

Finding Locke in the World of Ruin isn't easy, but one clue to his whereabouts is in the painting of Gestahl that hangs in Owzer's House in Jidoor. Face it and press A twice to discover a letter that tells of a treasure in a star-shaped mountain range. This is the Phoenix Esper that Locke hoped would revive the body of his beloved Rachel. The Phoenix Cave itself can only be reached once you have Daryl's Airship: try to land in the green spot at the centre and you'll be given the option to go in with two parties.

Once you've recovered Locke, head immediately for Narshe and try once more to gain access to the deserted houses therein. Their feeble latches can't withstand his newfound optimism, and the Ragnarok Esper or Sword will be yours for the choosing.



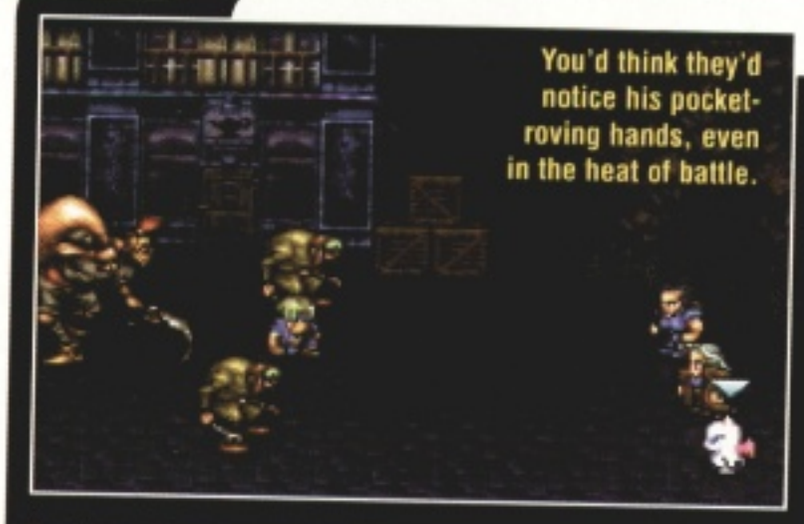
SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS

Combat may be central to the *Final Fantasy* games, but when you find yourself struggling through scores of battles trying to get from one end of a room to the other then it's a good idea to liven up the action with some different tactics. Being able to steal items from monsters during a fights is a skill present in both *FFII* and *FFIII*, and once you start using it you'll find it's very difficult to stop.

A few general rules apply. Most of the monsters in both games hold mundane cures or healing potions – some even give the same treasures you'd get for simply defeating them – but at low levels even the standard items are worth pocketing. Stealing from monsters is often the only way to obtain certain special items. The following lists offer suggestions, but it's up to you to search for the biggest treats.

Enlist the other party members as accomplices in the crime. Use them to cast Haste or Fast on the perpetrator, and cast Slow, Stop or Sleep spells on the enemy. Some enemies, like Earthguard, will have to be stopped to prevent them retreating, vanishing or exploding.

Your chance of success depends on your level and the victim's. As you gain experience you'll find it's easier to steal from lesser creatures. Though if a target proves especially difficult to steal from, it's probably holding something good.



You'd think they'd notice his pocket-roving hands, even in the heat of battle.

Be especially careful of creatures like the Ursus, as they can steal money and items from you too.

LOCKE

Whilst Edge's Sneak provides items that simply can't be bought, Locke's Steal and Capture really open up the possibilities of the Colosseum. For instance, every Tack Star stolen can lead to a Red Jacket. Find his Sneak Ring and Thiefknife in Narshe, and the Thief Glove in Zozo.

Equip Locke with the Offering and the Thief Glove and you'll have four attempts to steal in each round. Alternatively, give Locke the Genji Glove and make his secondary weapon the Thiefknife: his attacks will often be accompanied a Sneak attempt.

Unlike *FFII*, all bosses in *FFIII* have items to steal – even Kefka. You could even try stealing from the Goddess and Doom Statues in Kefka's Tower...

Don't be immediately deterred if you only find a potion or tincture, either: many *FFIII* monsters have a second 'rare' possession that can only be stolen occasionally.

Item	Prey
Air Anchor	Scullion
Air Lancet	TunnelArmr
Bolt Edge	Mag Roader
Cursed Ring	Didalos, Veteran? **
Debilitator	Lethal Wpn *
DragoonBoots	HadesGigas, Wyvern
Economizer	Aquila, Brontaur
Elixir	Air Force, Peeper
Fire Skean	Mag Roader
Force Shield	Ice Dragon
Full Moon	Prussian
Genji Glove	Dragon
Magicite	Flan, Intangir, Mover
Megalixir	EarthGuard (solitary island)
MithrilGlove	Goblin
MuscleBelt	Borras
Ninja Star	Vectaur
Ribbon	Brachosaur
Rune Edge	Number 024
Smoke Bomb	Bloompire
Super Ball	Mover
Tack Star	Reach Frog
Thornlet	Hidon
Tiger Fangs	GtBehemoth
Warp Stone	Displayer, Opinicus, Slatter, Warlock
Water Edge	Mag Roader
X-Ether	Laser Gun
X-Potion	Enuo, Mad Oscar, Spek Tor

* All of Edgar's Tools can be stolen from various Magitek armours – even the Air Anchor.

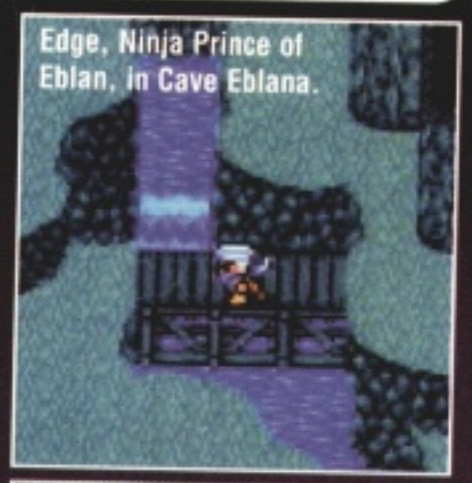
** Rumoured, though we've yet to see it proven.

If you're determined to find special items then Gogo deserves special consideration. Equip him with the Thief Glove and Genji Glove, place him in the same party as Locke and you'll have six attempts to steal in every round.

Want to steal from monsters in the Colosseum? Give Gogo the Steal skill three times (see *SP33*) and equip him with the Thief Glove and Offering.

EDGE

Once Edge has the Masamune sword he'll be able to cast Fast on himself by using it as an item. He can also improve his Sneak chances by pinning his opponent first. By acquiring even simple daggers through theft, Edge maintains a healthy stock of throwing weapons.



Edge, Ninja Prince of Eblan, in Cave Eblana.

A more invisible – and er, text-like – technique than Locke's.

Item	Prey
Artemis Arrows*	Kary
Cabin	Mac Giant, Red Giant
Cure Staff	Conjurer, Marion
Earth Hammer	Stale Man
Ether1	Fatal Eye, Lilith, Moon Cell, Pudding, RedWorm
Ether2	Pink Puff
Firebomb**	Red Dragon
Flame Spear	Flame Man
Medusa Arrows*	Black Lizard, Medusa
Poison Arrows	Cave Naga, Huge Naga, Hydra, Python
Silver Dagger	Iron Man
Silver Shield	Armadillo, Iron Back, Tortoise

* The Artemis arrows are the best in the game, and very effective against Dragons. And remember, this offer isn't available in the shops. Medusa arrows aren't especially strong but there's a good chance of destroying an enemy outright in one hit with their petrification magic. Always equip arrows in your character's strong hand and the bow in their weak hand for optimum archery performance.

**The Firebomb is a powerful incendiary device which should be used as an item in battle to blast all enemies.

The forum is for raising your Square-related questions as well as answering them. So ply us with your hints, tips, queries, scribblings – indeed, anything but beautifully hand-crafted silk flowers – by sending them to:

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IRRESPONSIBLE pictures

Eventually the huge turbines kicked in and the 3000 metre high eggplant mecha started its slow demolition of downtown Tokyo, pausing only to review the latest videos.

NEW DOMINION TANK POLICE – Act 10

Manga Video 15

27 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £5.99

Destruction, chaos and humour are three perfect words for the *New Dominion Tank Police* series – those who've followed parts one to nine of the series will know that the aforementioned themes crop up more frequently than Eric Cantona hits headlines.

Wil stated last month that these same viewers will know what to expect from each part of Manga's yarn of tank-based trauma, and this treads familiar ground, with little effort engaged in order to introduce shocks nor surprises.

As one of the world's most powerful industrial forces, Rockford Enterprises is looking to expand its corporate muscle into the military hardware market. To achieve its goal it sees employing Coldsman, the ex-Dai Nippon Giken employee who created the LftPz.IIa crab-like robot, as a significant development. With Coldsman's services in place, buying and selling weapons could become commonplace in Newport City, and Rockford's plans for world domination in the field come that much closer to reality.

But there is a fly in the ointment. Newport's mayor – who escaped death at the hands of Dai Nippon Giken Corp. in the last episode – is maintaining her stance on weapons, and is still looking to push through a bill to ban the production and sale thereof.

The episode progresses in a predictable manner, but it's entertaining nonetheless. As with the rest of the series, the dubbing is far from being perfect, but the above average animation, backdrops and character design compensate well.

On the whole, the series has been an enjoyable action-based tale, with just enough to make it stand out from the glut of anime available elsewhere, and this maintains those standards.

Adam Loxton

3 out of 5

URUSEI YATSURA TV EPISODES – Vol 5

Anime Projects PG

106 minutes (subtitled) RRP: £12.99

How on earth do you start to try and review a tape that has in its opening theme song the lyrics "Let's put weird and weird together and make it even weirder"? Well, put it this way, if you pick a *Urusei Yatsura* (*Those Obnoxious Aliens*) tape off the shelf without ever having seen it before just prepare for it to be, well, weird.

And if you're looking for hardcore cyberpunk, violence and sophisticated animation, just forget it. This is strictly TV anime circa 1982 – limited and just a bit crude looking. What sets *YU* apart from other series is how such a slight storyline (lazy and lecherous human boy Ataru accidently gets married to beautiful bikini-clad alien Lum but still lusts after every girl he sees) can be pushed into so many situations, so many, many, bizarre situations.

Take for instance, the 4D camera. When school rich boy Mendou comes in with his prize camera (the first Polaroid, owned by the British royal family, no less!) the class is suitably impressed. But when he tries to take a picture of Lum and Ataru and Ataru disappears, it comes to light that the camera doesn't take a picture of you, it puts you in a picture! Or the alien baby that latches onto Mendou causing him total embarrassment with the girls only to discover that it's a fully grown adult and needs 10,000 ¥100 coins to power its vending machine spaceship. Something only a rich person can supply

This is now the fifth volume of what must be one of Japan's best loved TV series and at 106 minutes proves very good value. It may be subtitled, but then again I just can't see Western voice actors being able to handle it anyway. Highly recommended but beware.

Wil Overton

4 out of 5

BUBBLEGUM CRISIS Vol 3 – Blow Up

Anime Projects 15

27 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £12.99

Girls in battlesuits don't come more famous than the Knight Sabers of *Bubblegum Crisis*. And now that the series has been dubbed into English (Anime Projects have also released the original subtitled versions) the girls are taking Manga on at their own game.

Three episodes into the eight and the evil Genom Corporation are hotting up their operations with the slimy Mason buying up property in troubled neighbourhoods with plans to build a boomer factory.

The trouble begins when two of the tenants he evicts are ten year old Sho and his mother, friends of Knight Saber Priss. Things go from bad to worse when the mother gets killed in her demolished home and Priss vows to get revenge on Mason. Not allowing her to go it alone the other girls suit up for a showdown with Genom.

This is solid anime cyberpunk. The Knight Sabers characters are all nicely defined and Priss gets to show her softer side as a big sister to Sho. What's nice is that the story dictates the action and not the other way around, as is so often the case in newer anime like *Angel Cop*, although you still know that everything's going to end with a big bash. Animation is above par and Kenichi Sonoda's character designs are always a joy.

On the dubbing side though, things aren't so wonderful. No matter how good the translation is, if your actors aren't up to the job then things are doomed from the start. And unfortunately American company AnimEigo seems to have gone to the same rent-an-amateur-actor as everybody else in English anime game,

If you really must have English dubbed anime then this is definitely on a par with Manga, otherwise stick with the subbed version.

Wil Overton

3 out of 5

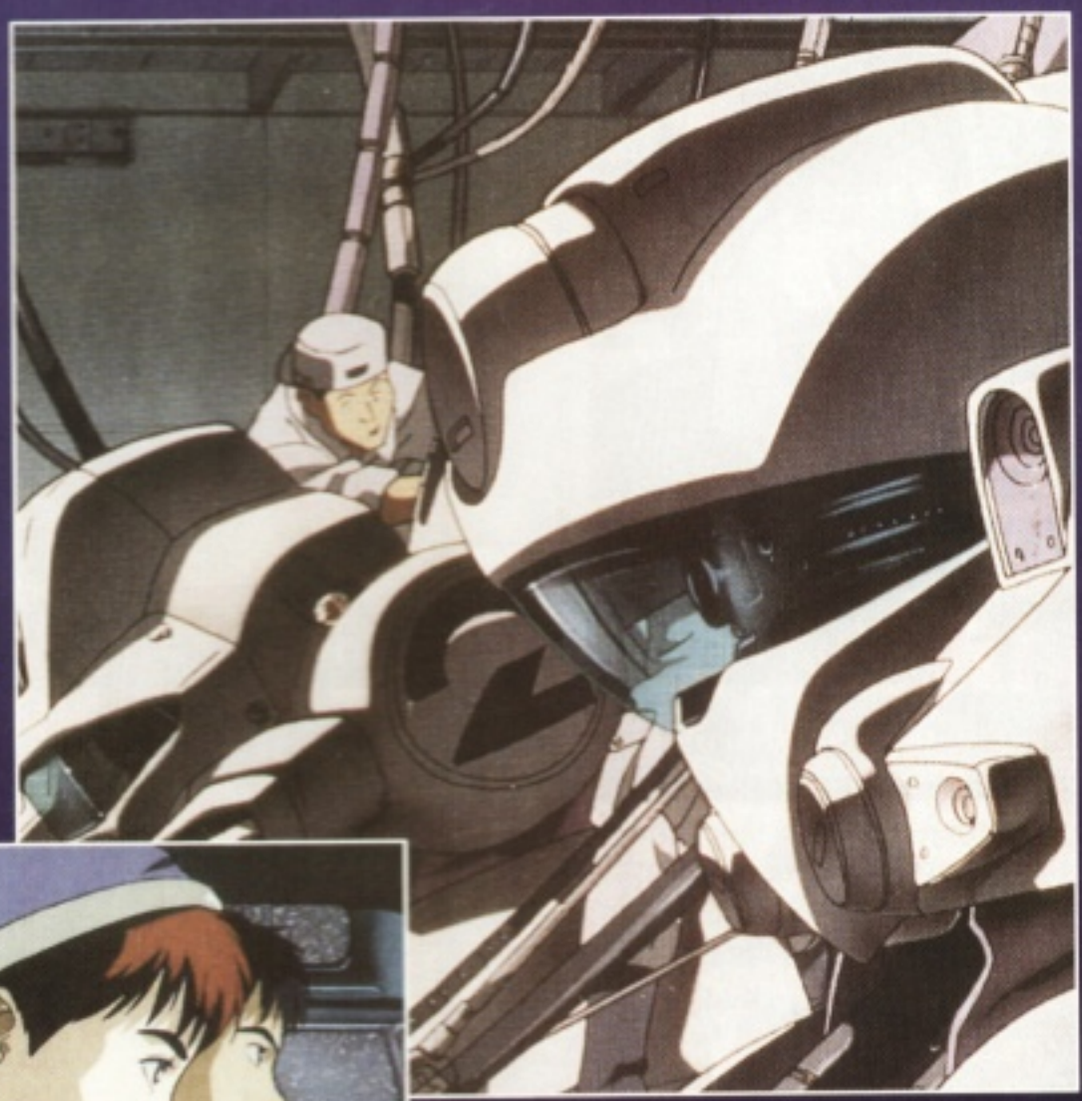
IP NEWSLINE

Get connected

With the cost of videos being what it is and the amount of tapes coming out each month being what they are, it's a deep pocket that can keep up with all the anime being released. Now, distributor Western Connection has come up with a scheme to help relieve some of that financial burden, if you happen to want a lot of Western Connection titles that is.

For a yearly membership fee of £10 you can join the WC Club which entitles you to a discount of 40% on its subtitled collection. That means a £10.99 tape can be bought for only £6.60. Whether or not this means that the company is having trouble getting rid of old stock is purely speculation on our part. For short of pocket anime fans this should be welcome news.

Above: Western Connection's *Devil Hunter Yoko* ponders on just why all her clothes have to fall off every time she transforms.



Right: No *Patlabor* film would be complete without the Labors themselves (© naff captions ltd.).

Below: Noa (oops, sorry, Noah) and Azuma face a bleaker Tokyo than we're used to seeing in *Patlabor*.

Target Lock-on... again!

No sooner has the first theatrical version of hit cops 'n mecha series *Patlabor* hit the video shelves (5 out of 5 in #33) than the second film prepares itself for a short run on the big screen followed by a video release. If the tone of the first film was a lot darker than its TV predecessor, then *Patlabor 2* is even grimmer. With the original Special Vehicle Division now disbanded and a coup against the Japanese government being planned, the Japanese Self-Defence Force find themselves in the front line as an American aircraft destroys the Yokohama bridge. Like the first movie *Patlabor 2* is a film that requires a bit of concentration to get the most out of it, doesn't rely on non-stop action to get its story across and is all the better for it.

The exclusive big screen presentation is being held at the Prince Charles cinema in London's Leicester Square (just around the corner from the Crystal Room arcade) on Friday 22, Wednesday 27 and Friday 29 September. If you fancy seeing this highly impressive film as it was meant to be seen then you can contact the cinema on (0171) 437 8181 but wait until after Sept 15.

VIDEO DIARY

AUGUST 1995

Trying to keep track of all the UK anime releases and their ever-changing shipping schedules is harder than trying to stay awake during an episode of the *X-Men*. Only Manga Video seem to be able to keep some sort of order to their hectic schedule. If you're waiting for a certain title to appear then it's probably best to check with your local video shop near the date printed here. Just in case.

MANGA VIDEO

PROJECT A-KO 3
HEROIC LEGEND OF ARSLAN – Part 3
ANGEL COP – Part 5
NEW DOMINION TANK POLICE – Act 10

EAST 2 WEST

THE ADVENTURES OF KEKKO KAMEN – Vol 2

ANIME PROJECTS

OH MY GODDESS! – Part 4
Evergreen Holy Night (subtitled)
BUBBLEGUM CRISIS – #5 Moonlight Rambler

HEROIC LEGEND OF ARSLAN – Part III

Manga Video PG

56 minutes (dubbed) **RRP:** £11.99

With stiff upper lip English voice acting and, on occasions, less than action packed story telling *The Heroic Legend of Arislan* (now strangely renamed back to its Japanese original *Arslan*, although on the packaging only) has been a surprise success for Manga with the first two volumes selling in excess of 25,000 copies.

Although the last release was way back in November 1992, part 3 continues directly on from its predecessors. The young prince Arslan is still determined to regain the Kingdom of Pulse and has gathered a huge army. But of course evil is also afoot and the mysterious Silver Mask is busy enlisting dark forces in his quest for the throne.

It's unfortunate that the very Englishness of the dubbing on *Arslan* proves to be its undoing. The whole thing just sounds like a BBC schools history program. A variety of the usual heroic silly names doesn't help either. The Westernised range of shojo (pretty boys) style characters may be something that the Japanese find exotic and exciting, but in dear old blighty they just come across as poncy old fops. That said, this is a good example of its type and recommended only if you like that sort of thing.

Wil Overton

3 out of 5

ANGEL COP – #5

Manga Video 18

27 minutes (dubbed) **RRP:** £5.99

In this episode Angel uses a big gun that has a recoil so powerful that it nearly breaks her arm, that's how stupid she is and it also marks virtually her only appearance in *Angel Cop 5*.

The rest of the time is taken up with the now totally cyborged-up Raiden killing lots of people and trying to take out lead nasty woman Lucifer.

Lovely character designs, decent animation, huge weaponry loads of swearing and lashings of gory violence.

Should you form part of Manga Video's core audience, then you'll love it.

Wil Overton

3 out of 5

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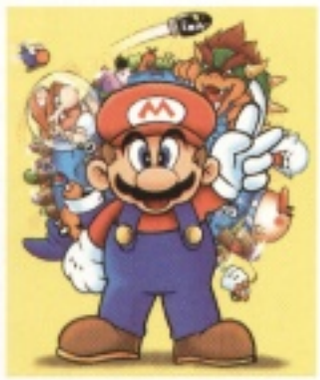

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